



**CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TYPOLOGY OF MEMBERS OF  
HEALTH AND FITNESS CENTRES**

by

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# DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation entitled “Consumer behaviour typology of members of health and fitness centres” is my own work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. I further declare that I have not submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at the University of South Africa (Unisa), or at any other higher education institution, for another qualification.



14 February 2019

**SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

Mrs Rachelle Tanith Reeler

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## ABSTRACT

Consumers are an important part of business and understanding their behaviour, wants, and needs plays a vital role in the success of any business. This study focussed on the health and fitness industry in South Africa and the consumers making use of their services, as well as the non-users of these services. The primary objective of this study is to develop a consumer typology for health and fitness centres, based on the consumer behaviour of its members. Non-gym member responses were also solicited. A questionnaire was developed and sent out via email and Facebook, using convenience and snowball sampling to gather quantitative data. In total, 209 responses were received of which 98 were gym members and 111 not. Various statistical analyses were conducted on the data. A factor analysis was done to create a more manageable number of variables, while a cluster analysis was done to indicate whether certain profiles existed within the data. Cross-tabulations were carried out on the profiles to identify any significant differences in terms of their consumer behaviour. A T-test was performed to determine whether any differences existed regarding the choice of a specific health and fitness centre, while two binary logistical regressions were done to identify which factors could predict gym membership. The results indicated that two distinct gym member profiles, and two non-gym member profiles, could be identified.

## OPSOMMING

Verbruikers is 'n belangrike deel van besigheid en 'n deeglike begrip van hul gedrag, begeertes en behoeftes speel 'n deurslaggewende rol in die sukses van enige sakeonderneming. Hierdie studie fokus op die gesondheid- en fiksheidbedryf in Suid-Afrika, die verbruikers wat van hierdie dienste gebruik maak, asook dié wat nie daarvan gebruik maak nie. Die hoofdoel van hierdie studie is om 'n verbruikertipologie vir gesondheid- en fiksheidsentrums te ontwikkel op grond van die verbruikersgedrag van die lede. Niegimnasiumlede is ook aangemoedig om deel te neem. 'n Vraelys is ontwikkel en via e-pos en Facebook versprei. Gerieflikheid- en sneeubalsteekproefneming is gebruik om kwantitatiewe data in te samel. Altesaam 209 response is ontvang, waarvan 98 gimnasiumlede is en 111 nie gimnasiumlede is nie. Verskeie statistiese ontledings van die data is uitgevoer. 'n Faktorontleding is gedoen om 'n meer hanteerbare aantal veranderlikes te kry, terwyl trosontleding gebruik is om te bepaal of daar sekere profiele in die data bestaan. Kruistabellerings is op die profiele uitgevoer om enige noemenswaardige verskille ten opsigte van hul verbruikersgedrag te identifiseer. 'n T-toets is gedoen om te bepaal of daar

enige verskille rakende die keuse van 'n spesifieke gesondheid- en fiksheidsentrum is, terwyl twee binêre logistieke regressies gedoen is om te identifiseer watter faktore gimnasiumlidmaatskap kan voorspel. Die resultate het getoon dat twee afsonderlike gimnasiumlidprofile, en twee nielidprofile, geïdentifiseer kan word.

## **KHUTSOFATŠO**

Badiriši ke karolo ye bohlokwa ya kgwebo gomme go kwešiša maitshwaro a bona, dihlokwa le dinyakwa go bapala karolo ye bohlokwa katlegong ya kgwebo efe le efe. Nyakišišo ye e lebantše go intasteri ya maphelo le tša boitekanelo ka Afrika Borwa, badiriši bao ba šomišago ditirelo tša yona, le bona bao ba sa šomišego ditirelo tše. Maikemišetšomagolo a nyakišišo ye ke go bopa thaepolotši ya badiriši ba disenthara tša maphelo le tša boitekanelo, go ya ka maitshwaro a badiriši ba maloko a tšona. Dikarabo tša maloko a go se šomiše lefelo la boithobollelo le tšona di kgopetšwe. Lenaneopotšišo le dirilwe gomme le rometšwe ka imeili le Facebook, go šomišwa sešupo sa boiketlo le sa koketšo go kgoboketša datha ya khwalitheithifi. Ka moka, go amogetšwe dikarabo tše 209 tšeo 98 ya tšona e lego ya maloko a lefelo la boithobollelo gomme tše 111 ga se tša maloko. Ditshekatsheko tša go fapana tša dipalopalo di dirilwe godimo ga datha. Tshekatsheko ya dintlha e dirilwe go bopa palo ye e laolegago bonolo ya dintlha, mola tshekatsheko ya sehlopha e dirilwe go laetša ge eba diprofaele tše itšeng di gona ka gare ga datha. Mekgwatshekatsheko ya go fapana e dirilwe godimo ga diprofaele go hlaola diphapano dife le dife tše bohlokwa go ya ka maitshwaro a bona a bodiriši. Teko-T e dirilwe go laetša ge eba go bile le phapano efe le efe mabapi le kgetho ye itšeng ya senthara ya maphelo le boitekanelo, mola dikakanyo tša lotšistiki tša go menagana gabedi di dirilwe go hlaola ntlha yeo e kago bonelapele boleloko bja lefelo la boithobollelo. Dipelo di laeditše gore diprofaele tše pedi tša go fapana tša maloko a lefelo la boithobollelo, le diprofaele tše pedi tše e sego tša maloko a lefelo la boithobollelo, di ka hlaolwago.

### **Keywords:**

Consumer behaviour, health and fitness centres, gyms, consumer segmentation, consumer typologies, consumer decision-making, consumer behaviour in sport, sport business environment

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Consumers are a focal point of any business and understanding consumers – and what their habits, buying behaviour and needs are – is an important aspect for the success of any business (Roberts-Lombard & Brijball Parumasur, 2017). Knowing the behaviour of the consumers, as well as what motivates that behaviour, places a business in a better position to convince a consumer to buy its products or services (Pelau, 2011). Understanding the behaviour of its consumers helps a business to achieve a competitive advantage by retaining its consumers through anticipating and providing for the present and future needs of its consumers (Roberts-Lombard & Brijball Parumasur, 2017).

This study aimed to categorise consumers, according to their consumer behaviour through the development of a consumer typology for members of health and fitness centres. A typology is defined as a way of describing groups of respondents with heterogeneous attitudes, behaviours, or views of the world, and typically comprises a set of descriptive names for each group (Association of Qualitative Research, 2018 (hereinafter AQR, 2018)). Typologies are discussed in greater detail in Section 2.5.2 of this dissertation. In this introductory chapter, a brief outline and overview of the study is provided. This overview serves as the context and motivation for this study.

The chapter begins with a short background to the study, highlighting the importance of this study. From there, the problem statement and the purpose of the study are discussed, and the research questions and objectives are developed. A brief overview of the research methodology used in this study is given, followed by a look at the ethical considerations of this study. The chapter concludes with an overview of the content of the remaining chapters in this dissertation.

### 1.2 A PRELIMINARY NOTE

In this dissertation, the words “health and fitness centre”, “health club”, and “gym” are used interchangeably. Gym is defined by the *Collins English Dictionary* (2018b) as “a club, building, or large room, usually containing special equipment, where people go to do physical exercise and

get fit”, whereas a health club is defined by the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (2018) as “a usually commercial establishment having members who pay a fee to use its health and fitness facilities and equipment.” As is evident from these definitions, the words are synonymous, and mean the same thing, and were used interchangeably in the writing of this dissertation.

Furthermore, as this study was on health and fitness centres, jargon specific to the industry was used in the writing of this dissertation. These terms are defined as follows:

- **Cardiovascular exercise** refers to any exercise that raises the heart rate of the individual, such as walking, running, swimming, or rowing (Health Status Team, 2018). This can also be referred to as cardio.
- **Strength training** refers to any exercise used to improve muscular strength and measures the ability of an individual to train against a high resistance (Durstine, Moore, Painter & Roberts, 2009 (hereinafter Durstine et al., 2009)). This type of training is achieved through the use of free weights and machines.
- **Aerobic exercise** refers to any variety of sustained exercises designed to increase the levels of oxygen in the blood, by means of strengthening the heart and lungs of the individual (Collins English Dictionary, 2018a).
- **Resistance training** is any exercise that causes the muscles to contract against a certain resistance, with the aim of increasing one’s strength, mass, tone, or endurance (Weil, 2018). This type of training is closely related to strength training.
- **Core stability** refers to the ability of an individual to control the position and movement of the muscles of the central core (the lumbo-pelvic-hip complex of the body, which includes all the muscles from the torso to the hips) of the body, which are responsible for limb movement and posture (Medical Dictionary, 2019; Rosenzweig, 2019).

## 1.3 BACKGROUND

“The health and fitness movement is a rapidly growing industry worldwide” (Afthinos, Theodoakis & Nassis, 2005:246), with health and exercise being two of the most discussed and debated topics in the media (Yap & Lee, 2013). Phillips (2005) noted that the North American culture is characterised by an obsession with exercise, and consumers spend billions of dollars on exercise products, apparel, exercise supplements, and health and fitness centre memberships annually. It is estimated that the fitness industry in North America and Europe generates over US\$30 billion



every year and is typically regarded as “recession-proof” (Iwuoha, 2015). Furthermore, in 2013, approximately 58 million adults in America had a membership to one or more of the 30 500 health clubs around the country, an increase from the approximate 50.2 million members in the 29 960 clubs in 2012 (International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA), 2013). This number has grown substantially over the years. In 2017, the global health and fitness industry comprised over 174 million members in 201 000 clubs and generated revenue of US\$87.2 billion (IHRSA, 2018). In the United States alone, 60.9 million health club members (in increase of 33.6% since 2008) had a membership to the 38 477 clubs across the country in 2017 (IHRSA, 2018). The same trend is apparent in the South African fitness industry.

South Africa is leading in the fitness industry in Africa, and has the highest concentration of fitness centres on the continent (Iwuoha, 2015). The fitness industry in South Africa generates approximately R12.5 billion in annual revenue, which is the highest in the world for an individual country, with Virgin Active alone making approximately R7.5 billion in annual membership fees (Mapumulo, 2017).

Membership of health and fitness centres across South Africa is growing in popularity. One such example is that of the Virgin Active branch that opened in Soweto, Johannesburg, in 2012. The club had 1 200 members before the club had officially opened, with an additional 1 300 members joining after its opening day (Moonda, 2012). The second Virgin Active, Jabulani Gym, that opened in Soweto in 2015 became one of the most successful clubs to launch in South Africa (The Economist, 2016). Another example of this growth in popularity is that of Dream Body Fitness (DBF) in Sunninghill, Johannesburg. DBF began in 2012 and currently has over 3 500 registered members, with membership growing at a rate of approximately 25% a month (Mcutha, 2016).

While many fitness centres exist throughout South Africa, Virgin Active has the lion’s share of members and centres, with Planet Fitness coming in second place. Figures for 2017 show that Virgin Active had 137 centres across South Africa, while Planet Fitness only had 32 centres country wide (Mapumulo, 2017). In addition to these leading fitness centre chains, the South African health and fitness industry further comprises of multipurpose and single purpose fitness centres, privately owned fitness centres, informal facilities such as exercise programmes in community centres or running clubs, and speciality facilities including those centres found in hospitals, universities and hotels, as well as dance, Pilates, yoga and cycling studios among others (Draper, Grobler, Kilian, Micklesfield, Lambert & Noakes, 2006 (hereinafter, Draper et al., 2006)). Adding further pressure to the industry is the increasing popularity of alternative fitness

options, such as the Adventure Boot Camp for Women, Curves fitness centre for women, free outdoor gyms, Cross-Fit, Zone Fitness, and home fitness options.

One reason for this popularity is the result of a change in the understanding of consumers that wellness is not a luxury (Netgen, 2013), and that for many people, having a gym membership can be seen as a sort of status symbol, much like a car or cell phone (The Economist, 2016). Furthermore, the increased involvement of medical aid schemes, such as Discovery, in promoting personal health by incentivising members to join health and fitness centres, as well as the varying pricing options available by health clubs for the different consumer needs, have also helped to increase the popularity (Shevel, 2011; Planting, 2012; Shevel, 2013). For many people, doing regular physical exercise has become an important part of daily life.

Physical exercise is defined by Edwards (2006:359) as “a subset of physical activities that are planned and purposeful attempts to improve health and well-being”. According to a study undertaken between 2010 and 2013 by *The Lancet*, 37% of the world’s adult population are overweight, while the South African Medical Council estimates that, in 2016, approximately 61% of South Africans were overweight or obese (The Economist, 2016). Ng, Fleming, Tobinson, Thomson, Graetz, Margono, Mullany and Biryukov (2014) (hereinafter Ng et al., 2014) found that seven in ten South African women and four in ten South African men were overweight or obese. These statistics, together with the rising concern over general health, have encouraged many people to engage in physical exercise due to the numerous health benefits associated with it.

These benefits include controlling one’s body mass, toning the muscles, improving the respiratory functions, and strengthening the heart, thus promoting overall health and vitality (Potgieter, 2006). Further benefits can include having a positive effect on blood pressure and all diabetes’ types, controlling cholesterol levels, easing back pain, anxiety, and depression, and minimising employee absenteeism and insurance costs to employers (Phillips, 2005; Potgieter, 2006). Yap and Lee (2013:401) support this by stating that “physical inactivity is one of the main causes of obesity and chronic illnesses”, while Schutzer and Graves (2004) highlight that regular exercise can reduce the risks of heart disease and stroke, and can increase the quality of life. While improving one’s health is an important aspect, it is not the only motivation for an individual to join a health and fitness centre.

Additional motives for promoting exercise include improving general health, stress reduction, weight management, training for a particular sport, pleasure and fun, lifestyle habits, and self-esteem reasons (Louw, van Biljon & Mugandani, 2012). Van Niekerk (2010) found that the

reasons people engage in exercise include setting personal challenges, improvement of skills, enjoyment, excitement, advice from doctors, pressure from family and friends, to improve one's appearance, get fit, meet new people, or to relax and relieve tension. Athanasopoulou, Oikonomou, Douvis and Skalkos (2011) (hereinafter, Athanasopoulou et al., 2011) found that the major motives for consumers to join a health and fitness centre include training and staying fit as well as losing weight. As is evident, health and fitness have become an important part of modern day life and the fitness industry plays a major role in promoting this (Draper et al., 2006).

## **1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Organisations today, including health and fitness centres, operate in a highly competitive environment in which constant changes in consumer needs, demographics, and technology occur (Theodoridis & Chatzipanagiotou, 2009). Consumers are a key aspect for any business and without them, the business is bound to fail. Consumers who visit a health and fitness centre often seek a particular experience from that centre (Dhurup, 2012) which will make them return in the future. This experience can be based on the descriptive features or characteristics of the centre, the overall perception of that centre in the mind of the consumer, and other aspects such as price, location, facilities, and equipment (Dhurup, 2012).

Building a relationship with a consumer is a challenging task, especially when the organisation has a large number of consumers with different needs and varying levels of interactions with the organisation (Dhurup & Surujlal, 2010). Knowledge of the behaviour of the consumers "helps in effective segmentation and in creating successful service offers" (Athanasopoulou et al., 2011:1). It is, therefore, important that a business understands its consumers, their buying behaviour, and their wants and needs.

When the seasons change, or when entering a new year, many people resolve to sign up with their local health and fitness centre, only to devote a few months to a rigorous exercise routine before losing focus and never returning (Boston College, 2011). A survey undertaken in 2011 by Reebok Education and Boston College, revealed that as many as 64% of women made a fitness-based resolution, with approximately 60% giving up within two months, and only four percent still maintaining their regime a year later (Boston College, 2011). This phenomenon is not restricted only to women; it can apply to all members of health and fitness centres regardless of gender, age, race, or income level. Furthermore, the ability of health and fitness centres to attract new members, and retain their existing members, is of paramount importance if the centres wish to

survive, as membership fees are the primary source of revenue for these centres (George & Wakefield, 2018). In addition, other potential sources of income for the centre, such as merchandise sales or sales from concessions, food or beverage vendors, are also dependent on the membership of the consumers (George & Wakefield, 2018).

Bearing this in mind, the research problem to be investigated is that there is a lack of specific research and knowledge regarding the consumer profile and the typology of consumers using health and fitness centres. As there is not a lot of information regarding the consumer behaviour patterns of consumers in health and fitness centres, and the development of consumer typologies for this industry, in South Africa, a research gap has been identified. The researcher aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on consumer membership of this industry while also to investigate why people are loath to join a gym.

In order to investigate this problem, the researcher will conduct a survey with the members of health and fitness centres in order to determine their behaviour, needs, and expectations regarding a health and fitness centre. Based on this information, the researcher will develop a consumer typology which, in effect, will help to categorise the consumers of the health and fitness centre. This will allow the centre to distinguish between their different consumers and take the necessary steps to segment their consumer base and to provide more detailed marketing strategies to fulfil the needs of these consumers. Also included in the survey was a significant group of non-gym members that were researched to determine the reasons why they do not attend a health and fitness centre, and what the centres can do to attract these consumers.

## **1.5 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH**

Consumers are the most important factor in the success of a business, and understanding their behaviour has direct benefits for any business, and this includes health and fitness centres. With more and more people joining the gym in a bid to be healthier, fitter or to look better, identifying the consumption behaviour, wants, and needs of the consumers, especially in light of consumer retention and subsequent membership renewals, is of vital importance.

Providing these health and fitness centres with this consumer information will place them in a better position to provide an enhanced value proposition to their clients, as they will gain a better insight into the behaviours of their consumers. This will help them to determine the various types of consumers currently utilising their services, how to better motivate and retain these clients, and

how the centre can encourage new members to join, and stay committed to, the centre. By developing a consumer typology for health and fitness centres, the researcher is aiming to assist these centres to increase both client retention and the consumer's overall satisfaction levels with the centre.

In addition, understanding what motivates an individual to join a health and fitness centre will provide the centres with a competitive advantage as they will be able to better understand and meet the needs and wants of the non-consumers. Furthermore, the centres will be positioned to provide a more individualised service to consumers to improve those needs and wants, while also shedding light on the reasons why people do not attend gyms.

The main purpose of this study, therefore, is to develop a consumer typology based on the consumer behaviour of the members of health and fitness centres. This typology will be based on the responses of the members to a survey that will describe their behaviour in the centre, their attitudes towards the centre, their motivations for attending (or not attending) the centre, and the continuation of their membership.

## 1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary research question formulated for this study is as follows:

**What type of consumers belong to a health and fitness centre, and can these consumers be classified according to their behaviour?**

From this primary research question, six secondary research questions were formulated:

1. What influences an individual to become a member of a health and fitness centre?
2. What activities do members pursue at health and fitness centres?
3. Which factors affect a member's overall satisfaction with a health and fitness centre?
4. What aspects motivate an individual to exercise, join, or remain a member of a health and fitness centre?
5. What reasons would convince an individual to join a health and fitness centre?
6. What other forms of exercise are done by non-consumers outside of a health and fitness centre and what would persuade them to join a health and fitness centre?

## **1.7 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

One primary research objective and six secondary research objectives were identified for this study, based on the primary and secondary research questions identified in Section 1.6 above. These objectives are discussed in the sections that follow.

### **1.7.1 Primary research objective**

The primary objective of this study is to develop a consumer typology based on the consumer behaviour of members of health and fitness centres.

### **1.7.2 Secondary research objectives**

The secondary research objectives of this study are as follows:

- Determine the influences that will affect an individual's decision to become a member of a health and fitness centre.
- Determine the specific activities that members pursue at a health and fitness centre.
- Determine those factors that affect an individual's satisfaction with a health and fitness centre, as well as the behavioural intentions of the members in terms of their complaining intentions, promotion of the centre, renewal of their membership, or price sensitivity.
- Determine what motivates an individual to exercise, join, or remain a member of a health and fitness centre.
- Explore the reasons why an individual would choose to join a health and fitness centre or not.
- Identify other forms of exercise done by non-consumers and the reasons why these consumers choose not to belong to a health and fitness centre.

Once the research objectives were identified, an appropriate research methodology could be developed.

## **1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In order to collect the empirical data needed for this study, an appropriate research methodology needed to be identified. A brief overview of the research methodology employed in this study is given in the sections that follow and is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four of this dissertation.

### **1.8.1 Research design**

The basic research design of the study is explanatory in nature and will utilise a quantitative approach. Quantitative research is defined as the systematic and objective processing of numerical data from a selected sample of respondents to generalise the findings to the population that is being studied (Maree, 2010). Furthermore, quantitative research is a structured approach in which “competing explanations must be formulated in terms of the relationship between variables” (Daly, 2011:193). Quantitative research is used to test an objective theory through the analysis of the relationships between the given variables (Creswell, 2014), and in order to carry out quantitative research, the researcher needs to first collect and analyse the data in an objective and systematic way (Maree, 2010). As this research is explanatory in nature, it will aim to explain, rather than simply describe, a particular phenomenon (Maxwell & Mittleman, 2008), which, in this case, is the consumer behaviour of members at health and fitness centres.

### **1.8.2 Research paradigm**

The research paradigm, or philosophical world view, is the “general philosophical orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher brings to a study” (Creswell, 2014:6). This research was conducted under the positivist paradigm.

The emphasis of the positivist paradigm is on identifying causal relationships and providing explanations for phenomena (Farquhar, 2012), and that the causes of a problem will have an effect on the outcomes (Creswell, 2014). Creswell (2014) further mentions that the important aspects of conducting research are the study of human behaviour and the development of numeric measures of observations.

Under this paradigm, research should be limited to that which one can measure and observe objectively, and which is free from the opinions and feelings of the researcher (Welman, Kruger

& Mitchell, 2005). Furthermore, this paradigm aims to formulate laws that can explain the causes of behaviour which can then be applied to a certain population (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). It is for these reasons that the positivist paradigm was selected as the most suitable approach for this particular study.

### **1.8.3 Data collection and analysis**

Quantitative research can be broadly categorised as either experimental or non-experimental research. For the purposes of this research, non-experimental research was used. Non-experimental research contains neither a planned intervention nor random assignment and, instead, one or more variables could be the source of the variation in a dependent variable (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). One of the most popular research designs used in non-experimental research is surveys.

Mrug (2010:1473) defines a survey as “a data-collection method in which individuals answer specific questions about their behaviour, attitudes, beliefs, or emotions.” A survey is used so that the researcher may obtain quantitative information that can be used to explore or describe a particular research topic (Maree, 2010). Mrug (2010) further states that a survey is a simple, flexible, and efficient way of gathering information from a large number of potential respondents. The data was obtained from members of health and fitness centres as well as from individuals who do not belong to a health and fitness centre. The survey was developed on Google Docs and comprised of structured questions (including multiple-choice questions, rating questions, and Likert-scale questions) which were divided into various categories. These categories provided information on the demographics of the respondent, determined the respondents’ attitudes towards health and fitness, determined the consumer behaviour of members of health and fitness centres, as well as the reasons for not belonging to a health and fitness centre. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

The collected data was stored on Google Docs and saved as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet was then exported to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) V25 for analysis. Various descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were done on the empirical data, to describe the data and to draw inferences for the population. An exploratory factor analysis was done to reduce the data into a more manageable set of variables. A cluster analysis was done to identify the profiles of the respondents, and various cross tabulations were computed to determine the consumer behaviour of these profiles. A T-test was done to determine if there were any



differences between the profiles regarding their reasons for belonging to a health and fitness centre and, finally, a binary logistic regression was computed to determine the probability of gym membership based on certain criteria. The results of these analyses are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five of this dissertation.

#### **1.8.4 Population and sample**

A population is defined by van Zyl (2014:95) as “a group of potential participants to whom you want to generalize the results of the study”. For this study, the population comprised all the active members who attended health and fitness centres, as well as those individuals who did not belong to a health and fitness centre.

Since it would be impractical, costly, and time consuming to approach everyone in the population, a sample of individuals was selected (Laher & Botha, 2012). Two general sampling strategies can be identified, namely probability and non-probability sampling. For this study, non-probability sampling was used.

Non-probability sampling, according to van Zyl (2014), refers to the inability to determine the likelihood, or probability, of selecting any one member of the population to take part in the study. This means that every member of the population will not have an equal chance of being selected to partake in the study. For this study, the researcher employed convenience sampling techniques as well as snowball sampling techniques in order to draw a sample.

Convenience sampling means that the sample is selected based on the availability of the participants at the time of data collection (in other words, those respondents who were on Facebook at the time the survey was posted), while snowball sampling implies asking those participants who have completed the survey to identify other possible participants (by “sharing” the link on Facebook with their followers). A sample of 209 respondents was received for this study. This included 98 members of health and fitness centres and 111 respondents who did not belong to a health and fitness centre.

Before any data was collected, ethical clearance for the study needed to be obtained.

## 1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical clearance was obtained for this study from the Department of Business Management Ethics Review Committee in 2017 (2017\_CEMS\_BM\_061) as shown in Appendix A. The application was deemed to be a low risk study as the respondents were completely anonymous and no in-depth questions of a personal nature were asked. Full consent from each participant was required prior to partaking in the survey.

An informed letter of consent was provided to each participant highlighting the purpose of the research, details of the researcher, potential benefits of the study, and an assurance of anonymity and confidentiality. In addition, participants were informed that participation was voluntary and that they may withdraw from the study at any time without having to give reasons and without any negative consequences. All participants in the study were over the age of eighteen and were not classified as vulnerable members of society. The participant information sheet can be found in Appendix B.

In terms of the secondary research sources, complete references were used and due acknowledgement to the original author was given. This ensured that plagiarism was prevented and that the ethicality of this study was upheld.

## 1.10 CHAPTER LAYOUT

This dissertation comprises six chapters, including this chapter. A brief overview of the layout and content of these chapters is presented in Table 1.1 below.

**Table 1.1: Chapter layout and overview.**

Chapter	Overview
<b>Chapter 1 – Introduction and background</b>	This chapter provides the background to, and context of, the study. It identifies the problem to be investigated and the research objectives which need to be achieved.
<b>Chapter 2 – Consumer behaviour</b>	This chapter provides a literature review of consumers and consumer behaviour. This chapter focuses on the consumer as a decision-maker and problem-solver, and highlights the factors that influence consumer behaviour. The chapter concludes by looking at consumer behaviour in sport and exercise.

<b>Chapter 3 – The South African sport and exercise business model</b>	Chapter Three provides a theoretical overview of the history of sport and exercise and explores the business model of health and fitness centres in South Africa, by examining the centres' micro, market, and macro environments.
<b>Chapter 4 – Research methodology</b>	Chapter Four provides a comprehensive discussion on the research methodology used in this study. This includes a discussion of the research process, research design, research approach, sampling design, data collection techniques and instrument, and the data analyses used in this study.
<b>Chapter 5 – Descriptive and inferential data analysis</b>	This chapter deals with the actual analysis of the empirical data. The descriptive and inferential analyses used in this study are discussed and the results are presented. This includes graphical representations of the data, measures of central tendency, factor analysis, cluster analysis, cross tabulations, T-test analysis, and binary logistic regressions.
<b>Chapter 6 – Conclusions and recommendations</b>	The final chapter serves as an overarching conclusion to this study. It discusses the results and conclusions of this study and offers recommendations.

Source: Researcher's own composition.

## 1.11 CONCLUSION

This first chapter provided an introduction and background to this study. The research problem was identified, and the research questions and objectives were developed. A brief overview of the research methodology employed in this study was indicated and ethical considerations were addressed. The chapter layout for this dissertation was also provided. The next chapter will provide a comprehensive discussion on consumers and consumer behaviour.

# **CHAPTER 2**

## **CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

An important aspect for the success of any business is the understanding of its consumers (Roberts-Lombard & Brijball Parumasur, 2017). Each consumer that enters a business, or purchases a specific product or service, has a particular motivation for their actions and a different need that they wish to satisfy (Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boshoff, Terblanche, Elliot, & Kloppe, 2015 (hereinafter Lamb et al., 2015)). A business that understands its consumers, their buying behaviour and the motivations behind this behaviour, is better placed to satisfy those consumers (Pelau, 2011). In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the importance of consumers and consumer behaviour as well as examining consumers as problem-solvers and decision-makers. The concepts of customer satisfaction, retention, and loyalty will then be explored, followed by a discussion on market segmentation and consumer typologies. The chapter will conclude by focusing on consumer behaviour in sports and sporting activities.

### **2.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSUMERS AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR**

Every individual has specific needs and wants that they wish to satisfy, whether it be the need to satisfy their physical hunger or the desire to purchase the latest piece of technology. Consumers can satisfy these needs and wants by purchasing products and services that they perceive to be of value to them. Without consumers to purchase products and services, there would be no need for a business to continue operating. In this section, the terms consumer, market, and consumer behaviour will be defined.

#### **2.2.1 Defining a consumer and a market**

A consumer is generally described as an individual who identifies a specific need, makes a purchase to satisfy that need, and in time, disposes of that particular product (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg, 2013 (hereinafter Solomon et al., 2013)). This definition is supported by Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015:33) who state that consumers are “complex individuals, subject to

a variety of psychological and social needs.” People have many different needs that they wish to satisfy at any given time. These needs can be anything from the basic needs necessary for human survival, such as food or shelter, to higher-order needs such as the need for status and recognition, and social needs such as the need to belong. Consumers, thus, aim to satisfy their needs through the purchase of products and services.

A consumer can be broadly categorised as either a personal consumer or an organisational consumer (Schiffman, Kanuk, Brewer, Crous, Du Preez, Human, Jansen van Rensburg, Raninger, Tshivhase, Shrosbree & Ungerer, 2017 (hereinafter Schiffman et al., 2017)) depending on their reasons for making a purchase. Personal consumers purchase goods and services for themselves, their families or for friends, and are often referred to as the final consumer, while organisational consumers would purchase goods and services in order to run their organisations, such as government agencies, and profit and not-for-profit organisations (Schiffman et al., 2017).

A consumer can also fulfil many roles, such as a buyer, user, initiator, influencer, or decision-maker (Du Plessis, 2007). In most cases, these roles are played by different individuals, for example, the buyer and the user of the product may not be the same person, as is the case when a mother purchases clothing for her child (Solomon, 2013). Regardless of the role they take on, consumers are a crucial driving force in the market and the reason for the existence of a business.

A market, on the other hand, can be seen as a set of actual and potential buyers of a product (Du Plessis, 2011). A market, therefore, can be described as the collective of individual consumers, institutions or groups that have a need for a product or service, and have the financial means to acquire these products and services (De Beer & Rossouw, 2018). By exercising their spending power in the market, consumers have an impact on the success of various stakeholders to the business (Du Preez, 2003). By focusing on the needs of the customers, a business is able to improve its overall performance and gain a competitive advantage in the market (Gunay & Baker, 2011). Without consumers to purchase a business’ products or services, that business will not be able to make a profit.

Therefore, in order to survive and be profitable in today’s world, it is imperative that businesses acquire new consumers whilst ensuring that they retain their old consumers (Du Plessis, 2011; McIntee, 2014). In order to achieve this, a business should strive to understand its consumers and their respective buying behaviours. This will place the business in a position to better serve its consumers (Gunay & Baker, 2011).

### **2.2.2 Defining consumer behaviour**

While there is no universally accepted definition of consumer behaviour, various definitions have been given by different academics and authors (Du Plessis, 2007). Consumer behaviour is defined by Solomon (2013:31) and Schiffman et al. (2017:4) as “the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences, to satisfy their needs and desires.” Peter and Olson (2010) expand on this definition by stating that consumer behaviour is concerned with the feelings and thoughts individuals experience and the actions they perform in the consumption process. Consumer behaviour can further be seen as the interaction of cognition, affect and behaviour, with the environment in which an individual conducts exchange activities (McIntee, 2014). It describes how an individual makes a decision to spend his or her scarce resources on the goods and services that are for sale (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). For the purposes of this study, consumer behaviour will be seen as the thoughts, feelings, and actions of an individual in the selection, purchase, use, and disposal of goods and services in order to satisfy a particular need.

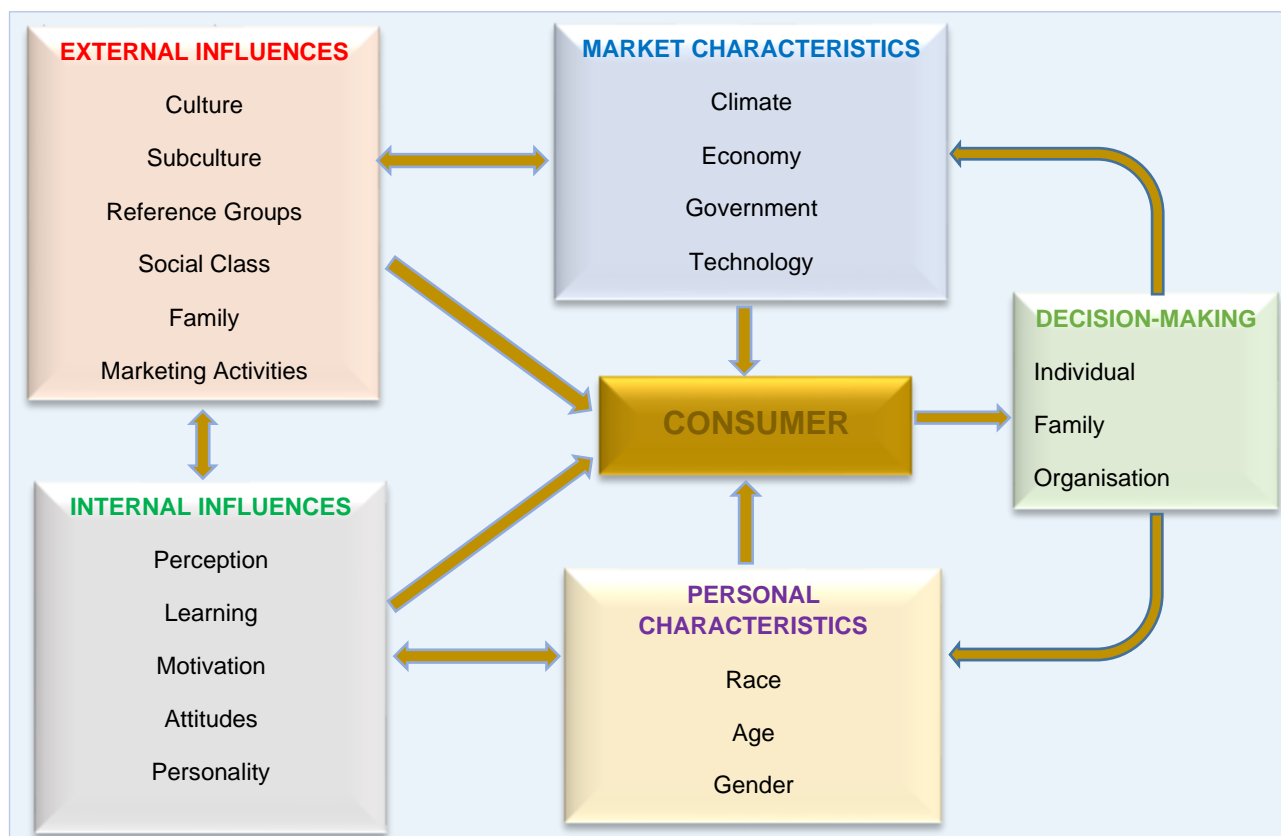
The study of consumer behaviour aims to answer many questions such as what products consumers buy, why, when and where they buy these products and services, how often the products are used, and whether or not they are repeat purchases (Schiffman et al., 2017). The concept of consumer behaviour comprises of a number of different elements, namely, that it is a dynamic process which involves the interactions and exchanges between a consumer and an organisation (Peter & Olson, 2010).

Consumer behaviour is a dynamic and ongoing process that takes place throughout the exchange process between a consumer and a seller. This behaviour does not only take place when the final payment is made in exchange for the goods. Instead, it encompasses the entire purchasing process and is concerned with all the issues that influence a consumer before, during and after the purchase (Solomon et al., 2013). This can include aspects such as pre-purchase research, the decision-making involved when selecting a specific product, and how the product can be disposed of once it has exceeded its use.

The behaviour of a consumer, be it an individual, group or a society, is dynamic in nature, in that a consumer's thoughts, emotions, feelings, and actions toward the purchase are constantly changing (Peter & Olson, 2010). However, this is not limited to only the consumer. The world and the environment in which the consumer lives are constantly changing as well. New technologies change the way in which a consumer researches and purchases a product, as

exemplified by the increase in the popularity of social media and online shopping. This “digital revolution” has had a significant impact on the behaviour of the consumer (Solomon, 2013). Consumers’ can now shop, or exchange experiences and reviews of products or services with other consumers, from the comfort of their homes or on the go. In short, the internet and social media are transforming the way in which consumers interact with each other as well as with businesses in general.

When studying consumer behaviour, it is important to note that this process involves the interaction between an individual’s thoughts, feelings and actions, and the environment in which they find themselves (Peter & Olson, 2010). This is because different products mean different things to different consumers, and those consumers will have different reasons and uses for purchasing a product. The final important element of consumer behaviour is that it involves an exchange or transaction between two or more parties, in which something of value is given up and something of value is received in return (Peter & Olson, 2010; Solomon, 2013). The overall model of consumer behaviour, as depicted by Roberts-Lombard & Brijball Parumasur (2017:26) is shown in Figure 2.1 below. The various components of this Figure are discussed in the sections that follow.



**Figure 2.1: The model of consumer behaviour. (Roberts-Lombard & Brijball Parumasur (2017:26)).**

As shown in Figure 2.1, various internal and external influences shape the behaviour of an individual. These influences will be discussed in further sections of this chapter. However, it is first important to understand the process a consumer undergoes when making the decision to purchase.

## **2.3 THE CONSUMER AS A DECISION-MAKER**

Decisions are made by people on a daily basis. A decision can be defined as the choice of one option from more than two options (Schiffman et al., 2017). In other words, for a decision to be made, a consumer will need to have a number of alternative options from which to choose. Solomon (2013) argued that every individual is, to some extent, an independent receiver of information about the world. This is because individuals are confronted daily with products, messages, people, and personal thoughts that make a person happy or sad. Various “invisible” aspects, such as motivation or personality, make a person unique and will have an influence on the decisions that an individual will make. Inherently, a consumer will operate as a problem-solver to acquire goods and services.

### **2.3.1 The consumer as a problem-solver**

Prior to purchasing any product or service, a consumer will generally experience an unsatisfied need or a particular problem that needs to be addressed, and for which a decision needs to be taken. A decision made by an individual to solve a particular problem, will be the result of a choice between different outcomes or consequences (Schiffman, Kanuk & Hansen, 2012). Consumers often have the freedom to choose between a number of different products and, therefore, they have numerous opportunities to make decisions. However, a common issue many consumers face these days is that there are too many choices rather than too few choices to choose from. This phenomena is referred to as consumer hyper-choice or choice overload, and makes it difficult for consumers to make smart purchasing decisions (Solomon, 2013). This will often result in a consumer feeling disappointed, dissatisfied, regretful, indecisive, or experiencing an unwillingness to make a choice (Schiffman et al., 2017).

When a consumer identifies an unsatisfied need, they will often make a decision to purchase a product or service that will provide the best level of satisfaction. Hence, consumers can be viewed as problem-solvers. While many purchasing decisions are made by consumers on a daily basis,



not all of these decisions require the same level of research and effort (Schiffman et al., 2017). Typically, a decision will fall into one of three categories, depending on the severity of the possible outcomes, consequences of that decision, and the amount of effort required from the consumer. The categories can be shown on a continuum, as shown in Figure 2.2.

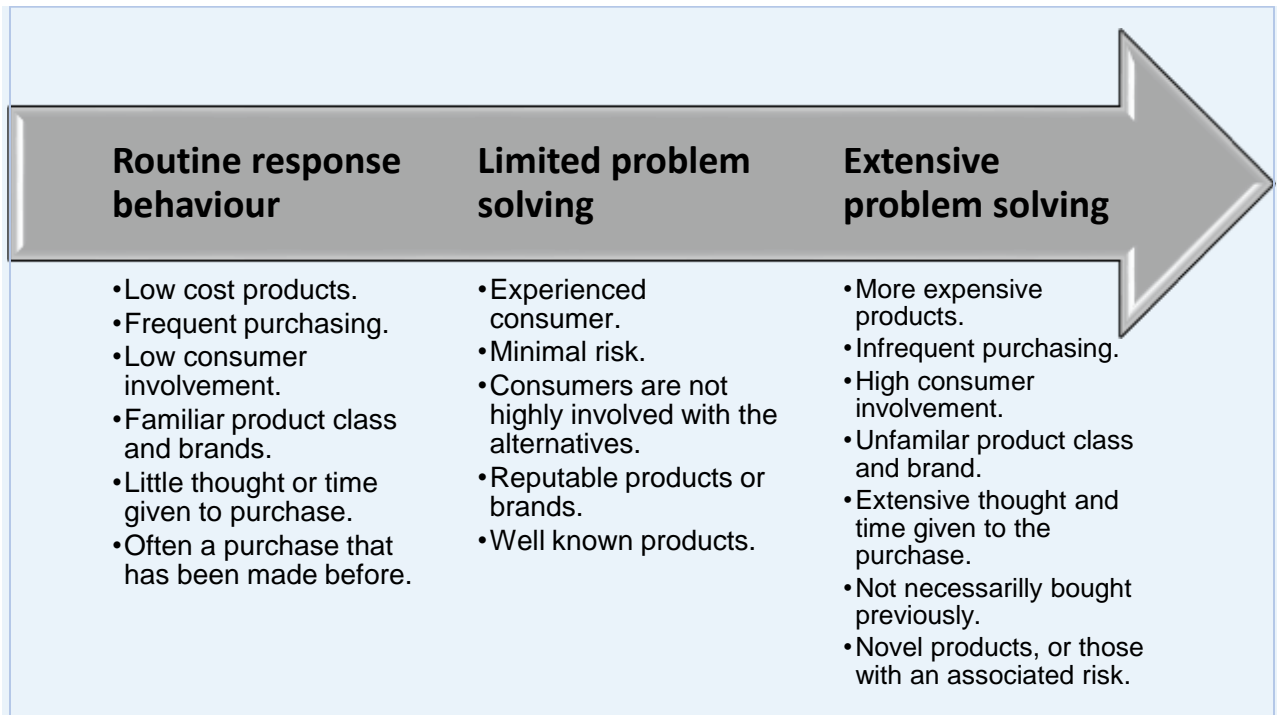


Figure 2.2: A continuum of buying decision behaviour. (Adapted from Solomon (2013:322); Erasmus (2013b:17) and Roberts-Lombard & Brijball Parumasur (2017:252)).

The three categories, as shown in Figure 2.2 are extensive problem-solving, limited problem-solving, and routine response behaviour, and will be discussed in the sections that follow.

### 2.3.1.1 *Extensive problem-solving*

Extensive, or extended, problem-solving occurs when products are difficult to evaluate or categorise (Kurtz, 2014) and, therefore, a consumer will spend a large amount of time researching the product and evaluating all the alternatives before making a decision (Roberts-Lombard & Brijball Parumasur, 2017). Often this type of problem-solving occurs when the consumer feels that the risk associated with the product is very high, or if the product is very expensive (Solomon, 2013). This type of problem-solving involves conscious planning and requires a substantial amount of behavioural and mental effort (Peter & Olson, 2010), and is, therefore, not done on a regular basis. Hence, it is not often used by individuals when deciding whether or not to join a

health and fitness centre. However, purchasing a new motor vehicle or a house are examples of extensive problem-solving.

### **2.3.1.2 *Limited problem-solving***

With this category, the broad criteria for evaluating a product or brand has already been set by the consumer (Schiffman et al., 2017). All that remains is to fine-tune the decision. Many problems and decisions that consumers face are solved through limited problem-solving activities (Peter & Olson, 2010). In this case, consumers are likely to search for fewer alternatives, and there is less need to scrutinize the available information before making a decision (Roberts-Lombard & Brijball Parumasur, 2017). This type of problem-solving generally occurs when the consumer wishes to purchase an upgraded version of a product they have purchased previously, such as a new laptop (Schiffman et al., 2017). Another example would be deciding which health and fitness centre to join.

### **2.3.1.3 *Routinised response behaviour***

Routinised response behaviour, or habitual decision making, involves very little cognitive thought or conscious control (Peter & Olson, 2010) and results in repeat purchases (Roberts-Lombard & Brijball Parumasur, 2017). Due to the low levels of cognitive involvement, routinised purchases are often done automatically, without the consumer being consciously aware of having made the decision (Solomon, 2013). Examples of this type of buying behaviour include purchasing laundry detergent, bread, or petrol for the car. The attending of a health and fitness centre on a regular basis, or the decision to renew one's membership to the centre, can, in some cases, be viewed as routinised response behaviour.

As consumers become more familiar with the different products, their level of involvement in the problem-solving process will decrease. In other words, limited decision-making can become routinised behaviour with time. Regardless of the type of problem experienced, consumers will have to go through a process to make their final decision. This decision-making process is explained in the next section.

## **2.3.2 Consumer decision-making**

As mentioned above, the decision to purchase a particular product or service is usually a response to a problem encountered by an individual (Solomon, 2013), and varies greatly according to the type of product or service involved, as well as the associated risks and costs for the consumer (McIntee, 2014). Before the decision-making model can be discussed, it is important to have a general overview of the different views of consumer decision-making as discussed in the next section.

### ***2.3.2.1 Views of consumer decision-making***

The decision-making process of a consumer can be viewed through the lenses of four different schools of thought, namely the economic view, the passive view, the cognitive view, and the emotional view. These views are briefly summarised in Table 2.1. Once these four views, as well as the three categories of problem-solving discussed above, are understood, attention can then be given to the actual decision-making process.

**Table 2.2: The four views of consumer decision-making.**

ECONOMIC VIEW	PASSIVE VIEW	COGNITIVE VIEW	EMOTIONAL VIEW
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The economic view portrays consumers as rational decision-makers, who have all of the information and can make the “perfect” purchasing decision.</li> <li>• This consumer generally will collect all available information and consider all possible financial implications.</li> <li>• However, this is unrealistic as consumers do not want to partake in extensive decision-making activities and will often settle for a product that is “good enough”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The consumer is seen as being submissive to the promotional efforts and selfish interests of marketers.</li> <li>• Consumers are often viewed as impulsive and irrational when it comes to their buying behaviour.</li> <li>• The main limitation of this view is that it does not acknowledge that a consumer plays a dominating role in the purchasing situation by purchasing a product that best suits his or her needs at the time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cognitive view believes that the consumer is a problem solver.</li> <li>• Consumers are viewed as actively searching for products and services that satisfy their needs and desires.</li> <li>• Consumers are information processors that establish preferences with regard to purchasing intentions.</li> <li>• Consumers are unlikely to obtain all the information regarding a purchase and will, instead, develop shortcut decision rules that they will apply to their decision-making.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumers tend to develop strong feelings or emotions towards certain products or possessions.</li> <li>• A consumer’s superstitious beliefs in brands and products play a role in their purchasing behaviour.</li> <li>• The current mood of the consumer will also affect how and where they shop, as well as what they buy.</li> <li>• Consumers who are driven by emotions will often make impulsive purchasing decisions.</li> </ul>

Source: Schiffman et al. (2017:408-412).

### **2.3.2.2    *A consumer decision-making model***

Consumer decision-making is defined by Roberts-Lombard and Brijball Parumasur (2017:244) as “a cognitive process that consists of those mental activities that determine what activities are undertaken to remove a tension state caused by a need.” A consumer will typically go through five stages when making a decision, which can be divided into three separate segments, namely, input, processing, and output. The input stage serves as a source of information for the consumer, the process stage focuses on how a consumer makes a decision, and the output stage focuses on the post-purchase behaviour and the ultimate satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the consumer (Schiffman et al., 2017). The decision-making model is shown in Figure 2.3 and is further explained in various sections in this chapter.

The specific five stages in a consumer’s decision-making process are shown in Figure 2.4 and are discussed in the sections that follow. However, while these figures provide a general overview of the decision-making process, it is important to note that a consumer may reverse or skip steps (Kotler & Keller, 2012), and can pass through the steps at varying speeds (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013), depending on the type of purchase to be made.

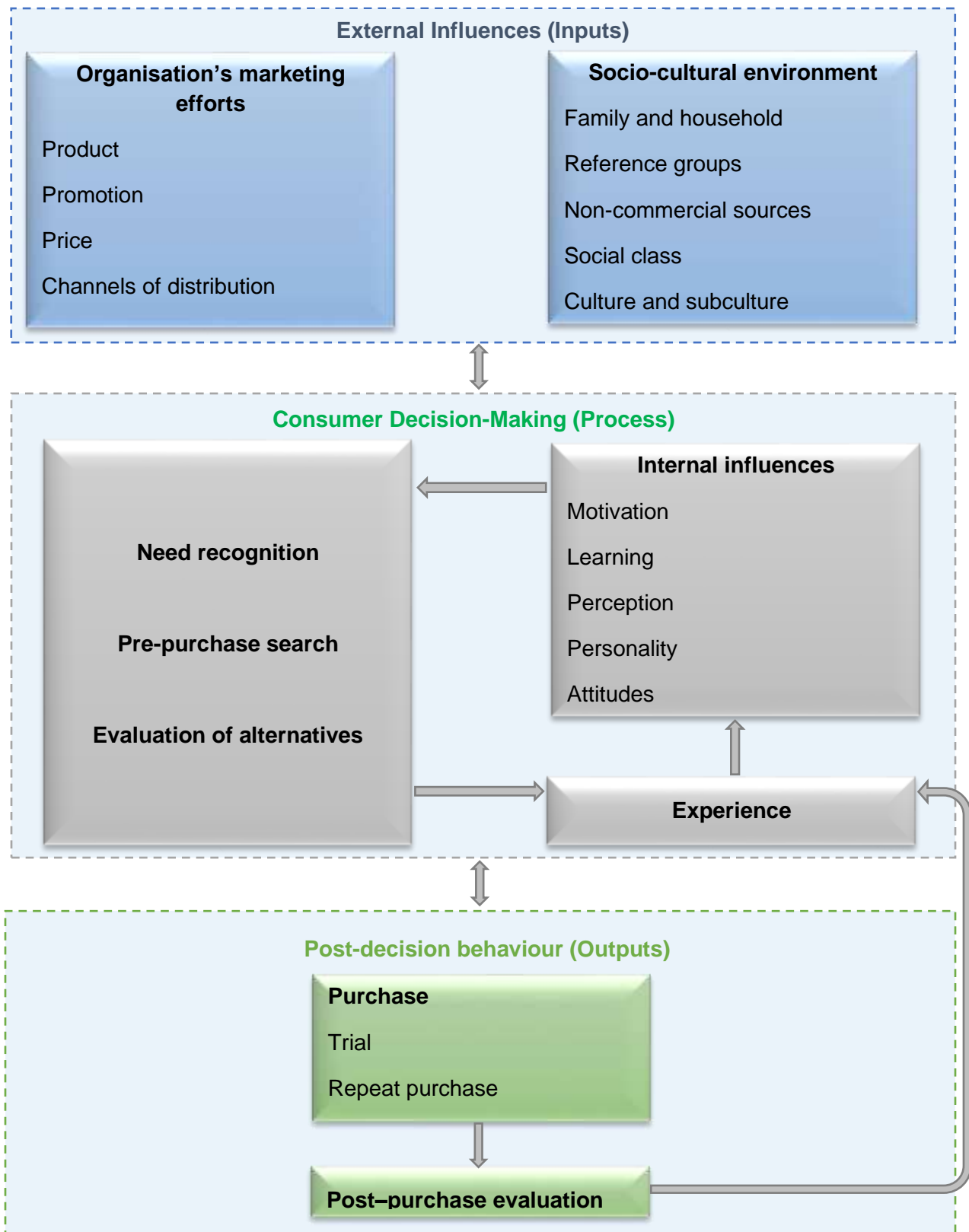
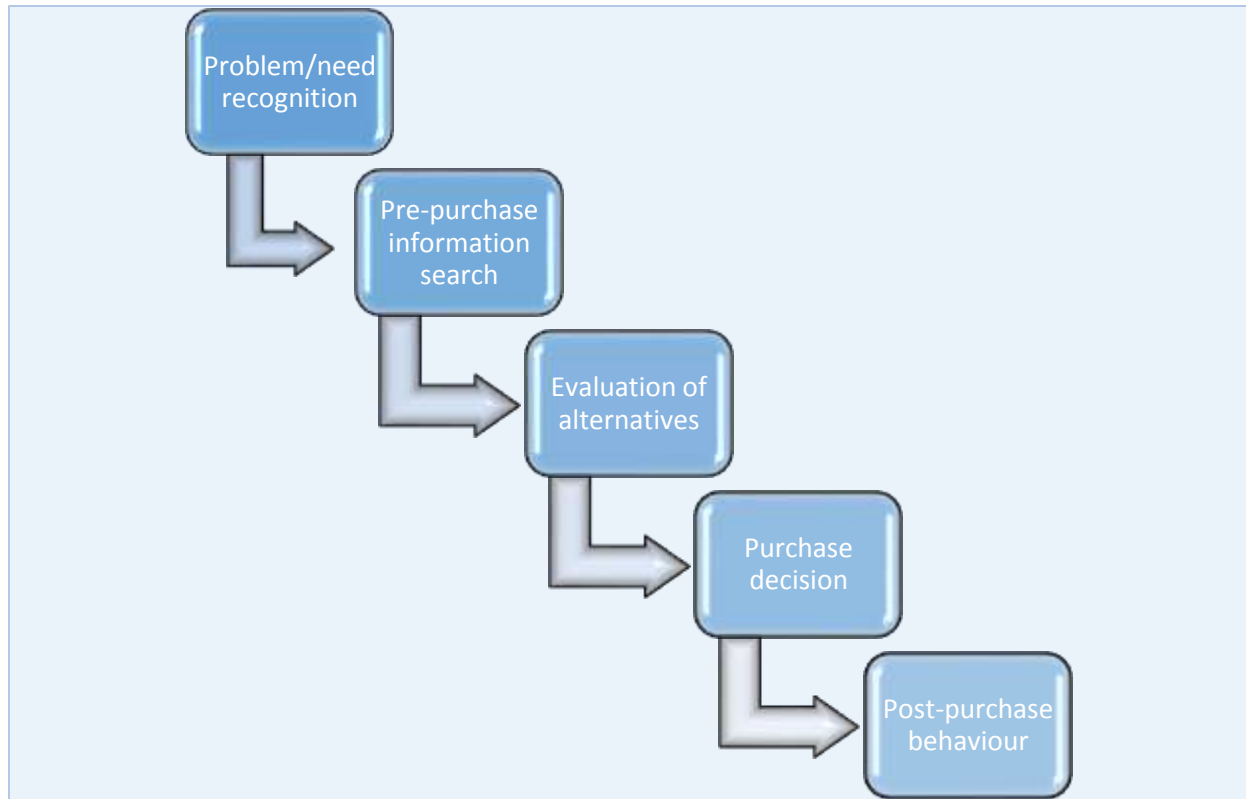


Figure 2.3: Simplified consumer decision-making model. (Adapted from Schiffman et al., 2017:413).



**Figure 2.4:** The five stages of the consumer decision-making process. (Adapted from Kotler & Keller, 2012:188).

#### **2.3.2.2.1 Inputs**

As shown in Figure 2.3, the inputs of the model refer to the external influences that have an effect on a consumer's decision-making. These influences include the organisation's marketing efforts and the socio-cultural environment. These influences are discussed in sections 2.3.4 and 2.3.5 of this chapter.

#### **2.3.2.2.2 Process**

The process section of the consumer decision-making model follows on from the input stage. This segment is concerned with how the consumer makes a purchasing decision and comprises the first three steps in the decision-making process (as shown in Figure 2.4). These steps are discussed in the paragraphs that follow. The consumer's internal influences and experience will also have an impact during this phase. The internal influences are discussed in section 2.3.3 of this chapter.

### ***Problem recognition***

The first stage in the consumer decision making model begins with the awareness by a customer of an unfulfilled need, triggered by internal or external stimuli (Kotler & Keller, 2012), and the extent to which the need may become a problem if ignored (Erasmus, 2013a). Internal stimuli results from an individual's basic needs, such as thirst or hunger, that drives a particular action, while external stimuli is the result of an individual seeing an advertisement or hearing a discussion about a product from external sources (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013).

McIntee (2014) and Roberts-Lombard and Brijball Parumasur (2017) describe the problem recognition stage as the difference between a desired state and the actual state experienced by an individual at a given time. Actual state need recognition refers to the individual perceiving a problem when a product does not meet expectations or performs unsatisfactorily, while the desired state refers to a desire or want that triggers a purchasing decision (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015).

A problem may be large and complex, or small and simple depending on the individual's circumstances (Solomon, 2013). Likewise, a consumer's decision can be either a simple or a complex one, ranging from impulsive and habitual buying decisions to those which require extensive thought and consideration over time (Erasmus, 2013b). This was discussed in Section 2.3.1 of this chapter. Erasmus (2013b) further mentions that a consumer's perception of the riskiness, complexity, or urgency of the problem differs from context to context, and even from person to person. This is because different individuals will see the problem in different lights and with varying levels of severity. In the context of this research, a woman may decide that she needs to lose weight and tone her body. Regardless of the reason behind this decision, she perceives her current body shape and size to be a problem that must be addressed.

### ***Information search***

The second step in the decision-making process is to define the parameters for finding a solution to the problem. This is achieved when the consumer gathers relevant information to assist him or her in making a purchasing decision (McIntee, 2014). Solomon (2013:327) defines an information search as the process by which an individual "surveys the environment for appropriate data to make a reasonable decision". The extent and duration of the pre-purchase information search will be determined by the type and urgency of the problem.



Sources of information are often a combination of internal and external sources. A person's own memory and personal experiences constitute internal sources, while advertisements and recommendations of friends, family and other people all form part of the external sources of information (Solomon, 2013). A further important external source of information is the use of the Internet (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). The Internet provides consumers with a means of comparing different products from different suppliers and, on many sites, is a constant source of advertising. Consumers also tend to visit social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, and online user-generated content sites, online review sites or discussion forums, in order to gather other consumers' opinions when making a purchasing decision (Solomon, 2013; Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). With reference to this research, a woman who has decided to lose weight and tone her body will search for information on the different options available to her that will help solve her problem. For example, she may consult her family, friends, or a health professional for diet and exercise advice, do an Internet search on the different gyms in her area and what they have on offer, or visit the local gym to seek the advice of the experts in the field.

### ***Evaluation of alternatives***

Once sufficient information has been gathered, the consumer will compile a list of the alternative products or options that will satisfy that particular need. These alternatives will often be about three to seven items that incorporate the characteristics which a consumer considers to be important or preferred (Erasmus, 2013a). These characteristics, and the way in which an individual selects the alternatives, is dependent on the individual and the specific purchasing situation.

While some purchases are made impulsively, most consumers would usually formulate a list of several desirable attributes, and rank each attribute in order of importance (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). Each alternative would then be analysed according to these attributes in order for the consumer to draw up a short list. The alternatives that the individual considers for selection are referred to as the evoked, or considered, set of alternatives (Solomon, 2013; Erasmus, 2013a). Those alternatives that the consumer excludes from consideration for whichever reason are known as the inept set, while the inert set comprises those alternatives which the consumer is indifferent towards as they are perceived to have no particular advantages (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Building on the example mentioned in the first two steps, the woman must now evaluate her different options. Her options, for example, would be to join an exclusively female gym, join a conventional gym, hire a personal trainer to train her at home, join a specialist class, or follow

her own exercise routine at home. Each of these options will have to be evaluated in terms of the costs and time involved, and whether or not it will suit her particular needs.

#### **2.3.2.2.3 Outputs**

As shown in Figure 2.3, the final section of the consumer decision-making process involves the outputs or the post-purchase behaviour. In this section of the decision-making process, the consumer would make a purchase and evaluate how that purchase meets his or her expectations. This evaluation will contribute to a consumer's experience. The final two steps of the decision-making process, as shown in Figure 2.4, are discussed in further detail in the paragraphs that follow.

#### ***Purchase decision***

Once the alternatives have been evaluated, a consumer needs to make a decision on whether or not to purchase a product or service. A consumer will make a final decision based on those attributes, or criterion, which are considered the most important to that consumer. This decision may be fairly complex or fairly simple depending on the consumer's perceived risk of the purchase (McIntee, 2014). The degree of perceived risk will vary between consumers and will be determined mainly by the amount of money at stake and the consumer's level of confidence in the purchase (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

Furthermore, two factors will also help a consumer to make a final purchasing decision, namely the attitudes of others, especially those who are important to the consumer, and unexpected situational factors for example, a change in the price of the product. With reference to the focus of this study, gyms could offer special rates when a consumer joins at certain times of the year or offer seasonal discounts or promotions in order to attract clients. In addition, the alliance between gyms and medical aid schemes (as in the case of Discovery Health and Virgin Active), and the associated lower rates and increased benefits have also assisted the consumer in making a decision regarding whether or not to join a particular gym. For example, a woman may decide to join a particular gym as it is close to her house and she only pays a fraction of the normal membership fees due to the alliance between the gym and her medical aid scheme.

#### ***Post-purchase behaviour***

The final stage in the decision-making process is for the consumer to evaluate the product's performance after it has been purchased (Rousseau, 2007b). Once a purchase has been made,

the consumer will either be satisfied or dissatisfied with the decision based on how well the product meets the consumer's expectations (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013; Lamb et al., 2015). An important element in the post-purchase behaviour of consumers is that of cognitive dissonance or post-purchase doubt.

Cognitive dissonance occurs when a consumer attempts to reassure himself or herself that they have made the correct purchasing decision (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). This can be done by avoiding competitive products and persuading others to support their choice. More often than not, the dissonance occurs when a consumer realises that all products have advantages and disadvantages and they tend to become uneasy about losing the benefits they could have had with the other product (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). This feeling of doubt is also known as buyer's remorse (McIntee, 2014).

Should a product meet the consumer's expectations, that consumer will be satisfied and will probably make the same purchase again in the future (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). However, the opposite is also true and a dissatisfied consumer will likely search for an alternative to better fulfil his or her needs. With regard to a gym, a consumer may join a gym and have a good experience. The trainers are helpful and the equipment is suitable for that consumer's needs. On the other hand, a consumer may have a terrible experience at a gym, with unhelpful and unfriendly trainers, and a dirty environment. If a person has an unsatisfying experience at a gym, that person may withdraw their membership and join a competitor, or lodge a complaint on an online review site such as *Hello Peter*. A person may also feel that, because they have entered into a contract with the gym, they have to use it regardless of how bad their experience was. This results in that person becoming unmotivated to train and, therefore, not accomplishing their goals. Furthermore, it can lead to a decrease in that person's self-confidence and abilities.

As mentioned, this process is not fixed and consumers will often move in and out of steps, return to a previous step, start the entire process over, or end the process at any time (McIntee, 2014). While this process may seem simple and clear-cut, a number of factors will have an influence on how a consumer reacts during the decision-making process.

### **2.3.3 Internal factors influencing consumer behaviour and decision-making**

A consumer's buying behaviour and decision-making behaviour is influenced by a number of factors that can be grouped as either internal or external factors. These factors can be seen in

Figure 2.5. In this section, the internal factors that influence consumer behaviour will be discussed. These factors include motivation, perception, personality, attitudes, and learning, each of which will be discussed in the sections that follow.

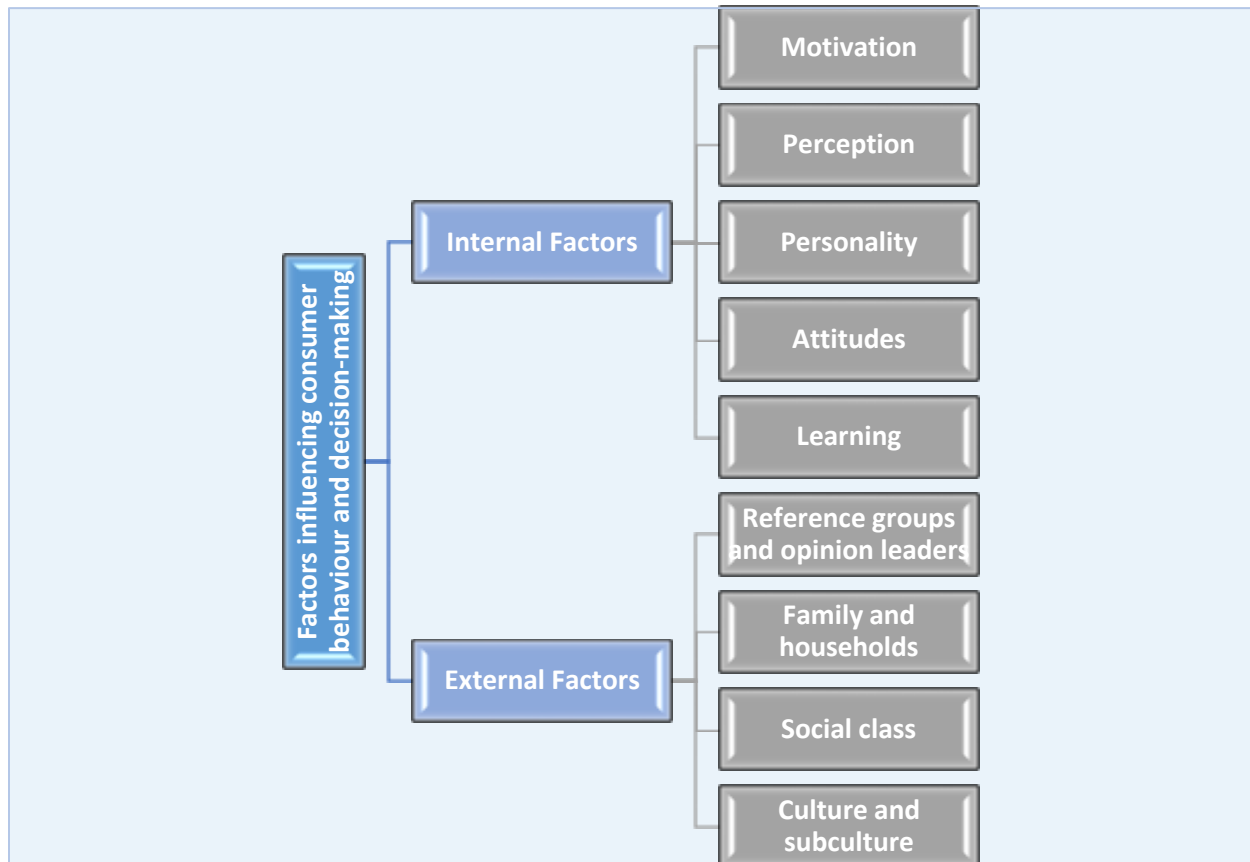


Figure 2.5: Factors influencing consumer behaviour and decision-making. (Source: Researcher's own composition)

### 2.3.3.1 *Motivation*

People have many varying needs at different times and in different situations. These needs can range from wanting water when one is thirsty, to wanting to get a promotion at work, or wanting to be fit and in shape. Once a need reaches a certain level of intensity, it becomes a motive, or drive, which requires satisfaction (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013).

Motivation is, thus, the driving force that compels a person into taking action (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015; Schiffman et al., 2017) and represents the reasons for a person to behave or act in a certain way. It is triggered by a state of psychological tension, and is caused by an unfulfilled

need (Rousseau, 2007a; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Motivation refers to the factors that have an influence on the behaviour of an individual, and can either pull an individual away from other behaviours or push that individual towards a particular behaviour (Botha, 2013a). Motivation, therefore, can have negative or positive motives. Negative motivation, for example can refer to an individual joining a gym to avoid health problems, while positive motivation could refer to joining a gym in order to look more attractive (Schiffman et al., 2017).

Motivation can further be seen as having rational or emotional motives. Rational motives are based on logic and facts, and assume that the individual has made the best decision for the situation (Schiffman et al., 2017), while emotional motives are based on the subjective experiences of an individual (Botha, 2013a). It is important to remember that each individual is unique, with his or her own values, personality, and circumstances. What motivates one individual to join a gym, for example, may not necessarily motivate anyone else. Furthermore, what may be a rational decision for one individual could be an emotional decision for someone else.

Due to its subjective nature, an individual's motivation may come from intrinsic or extrinsic sources. Intrinsic motivation refers to an internal process that occurs when an individual does something that brings them satisfaction or pleasure, while extrinsic motivation is an external benefit that serves as a means to an end (Botha, 2013a; Guillen, Ferrero & Hoffman, 2015). For example, a person might join a gym as a way of increasing their fitness or general health (intrinsic motivation), or they might join a gym because they are under doctor's orders to do so (extrinsic motivation).

Motivation changes constantly in reaction to an individual's experiences (Schiffman et al., 2017). As one need is satisfied, or a goal is achieved, so another need or goal comes to the fore that may require a different level of motivation. An individual's motivation is dependent on the situation and urgency of the motive. In other words, a woman who is getting married in two weeks' time will be motivated to visit the gym more frequently and will train more intensely than a woman who is only getting married in one year's time.

### **2.3.3.2 Perception**

Consumers tend to make a decision based on their subjective perceptions and not necessarily on objective reality (Schiffman et al., 2017). Perception is defined by Armstrong and Kotler (2013:168) and Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015:114) as the process through which an individual

“selects, organises and interprets various stimuli into a coherent and meaningful picture of the world around them”. Stimuli refers to any event or physical object to which a person is exposed and which has an effect on any of the senses, namely, sight, taste, smell, touch or hearing (Du Toit, 2013; Lamb et al., 2015). This can include, for example, the look and feel of a fitness centre, as well as the smells and sounds associated with it.

It can further refer to the brand name, advertising or the product packages on offer (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). For example, an individual may see an advertisement for a gym that highlights their friendly and helpful staff and their state-of-the-art equipment. Furthermore, the advertisement may draw attention to a special “discounted membership fee” promotion offered by the gym. This advertisement might help shape the perception of the individual towards the gym. Du Toit (2013) further states that, in addition to the basic senses, perception can also refer to experiences and formal learning. In other words, an individual who has had a bad experience in a gym may develop a negative perception of all gyms in general.

Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015) mention that the degree of sensitivity one experiences when exposed to stimuli is dependent on the level of intensity of the stimuli and the quality of an individual’s sensory receptors. Perceptions are, thus, subjective in nature (Du Toit, 2013). Each individual perceives the world differently and will often react based on their own version of reality. In essence, one’s perception of the world becomes one’s reality (Du Toit, 2013; McIntee, 2014) and this will have an influence on the decisions an individual makes.

### **2.3.3.3 *Personality***

An individual’s personality comprises the inner psychological characteristics that determine and reflect how that person will think and act, as well as how he or she will interact with others (Roodt, 2009; Solomon, 2013; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). It includes those qualities, traits, attributes, mannerisms and factors that distinguish one individual from another (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Bergh (2009:248) states that one’s personality indicates a “profile of consistent attributes and behaviour” through different situations and at different times. This means that an individual should behave in a similar manner regardless of the situation. Each person has a unique personality that is a result of various hereditary and environmental influences (Bergh, 2009; Roodt, 2009).

Hereditary factors are those which are related to one's biological and genetic make-up and are determined at conception (Roodt, 2009). These influences can include aggression and negative emotions, as well as one's level of physical activity (Bergh, 2009). Environmental influences, on the other hand, refer to aspects such as family influences, social affiliations, culture, the level of education, and one's socio-economic status (Bergh, 2009; Dos Santos, 2013a). A combination of these factors will shape an individual's core disposition and determine their dominant characteristics (Lamb et al., 2015). This can include characteristics such as introversion and extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, emotional stability, and conscientiousness (Fraj & Martinez, 2006), also known as the "Big Five framework of personality", as well as traits such as the need for rigidity, uniqueness, sensation or novel experiences (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). According to a study conducted by Yap and Lee (2013), people who are more inclined towards exercise, and who are most likely to reach their fitness goals, tend to have a more extroverted personality. Introverted individuals, on the other hand, are more inclined to avoid exercising, even though they believe that they have the ability to exercise and achieve their fitness goals.

Closely associated with personality are the concepts of self and self-image. The self and self-image refer to the way in which the individual views him or herself. This will affect how the consumer will make a purchasing decision, as consumers will likely purchase a product or service that enhances their self-image while avoiding those products or services that lower their self-image (Schiffman et al., 2017).

#### **2.3.3.4 Attitude**

An individual's attitude refers to that person's positive or negative beliefs or feelings toward a particular activity, object, or organisation, which are developed through experience and interaction (McIntee, 2014). Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015:172) describe attitudes as a "learned predisposition to behave in a consistently favourable or unfavourable way toward a given object". It is important to note that an attitude is a learned behaviour that develops through experience, reasoning and information, and is not something that an individual is born with (Mpinganjira, 2013a). In addition, while attitudes tend to be fairly long-lasting, they are not set in stone. Individuals change their existing attitudes and can even form new attitudes towards the same products under different circumstances (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). For example, an individual

who hated the idea of exercise and attending a gym could one day find that he or she really enjoys it, thus changing that individual's attitude towards gyms and fitness.

An attitude comprises three components, namely the affective, cognitive and conative components (Mpinganjira, 2013a; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). The affective component refers to the individual's feelings and emotions regarding the object or service and often includes emotionally charged states such as happiness, anger, or guilt (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). This component assesses whether an individual has an overall positive or negative attitude towards a specific product or activity. For example, an individual can state that he or she likes or does not like doing exercise, without going into detail regarding the reasons for this decision.

The cognitive component focuses on an individual's perception and knowledge of a particular object, and is often expressed in the form of a belief (Mpinganjira, 2013a). On the other hand, the behavioural or conative component refers to the intentions of an individual to react or behave in a certain way (Solomon, 2013), for example, an individual's intention to join a gym may result in that individual actually joining a gym. However, it can happen that one's intentions do not always result in action, in other words, a person may intend to join a gym in January but never actually do so.

A consumer's attitude towards a product or service will play a role in how that consumer will make a purchasing decision. In the last section, the role that learning plays in consumer decision-making will be discussed.

#### **2.3.3.5 Learning**

The final internal factor that influences consumer behaviour is that of learning. Learning is defined by Botha (2013b:55) as a "change in behaviour and knowledge as a result of an experience". Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015) support this by stating that learning occurs when an individual applies their current knowledge and past experiences to a present situation. Human behaviour, and, in essence, consumer behaviour, is a learned process that evolves and develops throughout a person's life.

In most cases, learning can be acquired through actively searching for information to provide a required result. This is also referred to as intentional learning (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). For example, an individual who puts in the effort to find information regarding what classes the local gym offers is engaging in intentional learning. Learning can also be incidental, in that it occurs



by accident or without much effort on behalf of the individual (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Incidental learning takes place, for example, when a person sees an advertisement on television for the local gym that mentions the various classes on offer.

All learning, whether intentional or incidental, is developed through the interaction between stimuli, drives or motivators, cues, responses, and reinforcement (Kotler & Keller, 2012). As mentioned previously, a stimulus refers to an object or event that has an effect on the senses, while a drive or motivator compels an individual into action. Cues are minor stimuli that direct an individual's motivation and determine the way in which that person will respond (Kotler & Keller, 2012; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). For example, seeing an advertisement for a spinning class at a local gym might help a person to realise that they want to get in shape and that spinning might be the answer to achieving this objective. By signing up for the spinning class, that individual is reacting to a motive or cue. This is known as the consumer's response to the cue.

The final aspect is reinforcement or the reward that the consumer receives after purchasing a product or service (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). This reward can be anything from the enjoyment and pleasure one experiences, to the physical benefits associated with the particular product or service. In the context of this study, for example, an individual may enjoy the feeling of content that they get after a workout session, or they may enjoy the chemical release of dopamine, or even the long-term results of being fit and healthy.

In this section, a number of internal factors that have an influence on consumer decision-making were discussed. In the next section, the focus will shift to the external factors that influence a consumer's decision-making.

### **2.3.4 External factors influencing consumer behaviour**

As shown in Figure 2.5, the internal factors are not the only factors that will influence an individual to behave in a certain way or make a certain decision. There are also external factors that will have an impact on the decision-making process. These external factors will be discussed in the sections that follow and include reference groups and opinion leaders, family and households, social class and status, and cultural influences.

#### **2.3.4.1 Reference groups and opinion leaders**

A reference group is defined as a group or individual that is used by a consumer to guide his or her behaviour (Dos Santos, 2013b). Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015) expand on this definition by stating that a reference group acts as a comparison, norm, or influence, for an individual's values, opinions, and behaviours. Such a group, or individual, may have an indirect or direct influence on a person, and can be categorised as one of three types of reference group, namely, associative, dissociative, or aspirational reference groups, depending on the individual's membership status.

An associative group is defined as that group to which an individual belongs, and to which he or she has been accepted (Dos Santos, 2013b). Associative groups are also known as membership groups and can be sub-divided into primary and secondary groups. The primary group would be, for example, one's family or other persons with whom an individual would have continuous interaction in a mostly informal manner. Secondary groups, on the other hand, are those with which an individual would have less continuous, but more formal, interactions such as a professional or a religious group (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

A dissociative group is the opposite of a membership group as it refers to a group to which a person does not wish to belong (Dos Santos, 2013b). For example, this could include not wanting to be associated with drug addicts or gangs. An aspirational group, on the other hand, is a group that a person admires and hopes to one day be a part of (Kotler & Keller, 2012), either physically or symbolically (Dos Santos, 2013b), and could include, for example, aspiring to be a professional athlete.

Reference groups can further be classified as comparative, normative, real, or symbolic reference groups. A comparative group acts as a point of reference for an individual's behaviour, for example, imitating the lifestyle, clothing and other traits which the individual deems to be admirable (Schiffman et al., 2017). A normative group influences the behaviour and values of the individual, as is the case where a child's family will influence how that child makes a decision (Schiffman et al., 2017). A real reference group is closely associated with the membership group described above as it refers to that group to which the individual is a member, such as a family or a church group (Dos Santos, 2013b). The final type of reference group is that of the symbolic group. The symbolic group is defined by Dos Santos (2013b) and Schiffman et al. (2017) as that group to which the individual is unlikely to become a member, despite the individual discretely

and voluntarily adopting that group's behaviour, norms and values. This group could include, for example, celebrities and professional sports people.

Within a reference group, one will often find a leader, also known as an opinion leader, who influences others in the group. These individuals are often curious, self-indulgent activists, and are usually the first to try a new product or service (Lamb et al., 2015). Other individuals often look to opinion leaders for information and advice (Rousseau, 2007d). Opinion leaders can range from sports stars and celebrities, to experts in the field. In this research, for example, an individual may view a personal trainer at a gym or a local sports star as an opinion leader in the field of fitness. This individual may influence the consumer to join a gym or follow a specific training routine.

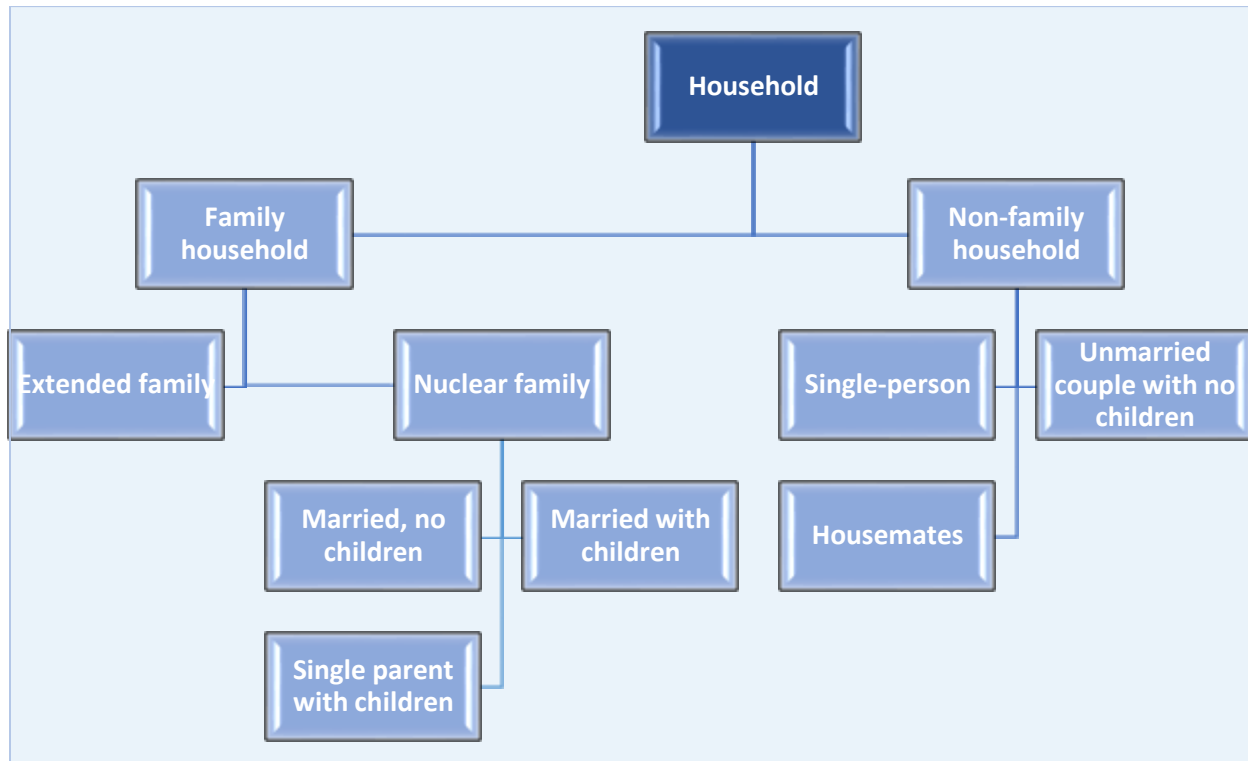
It is important to note that opinion leaders and reference groups, like other influencing factors, are subjective, in that whom one person sees as an opinion leader or treats as a reference group, may not necessarily be the case for another individual. The strength of the opinion leader or reference group's influence is determined by a number of factors, namely:

- The individual's vulnerability to the opinion leader or reference group's influence.
  - The individual's level of interaction with and commitment to the group.
  - The individual's level of self-confidence with the situation.
  - The extent to which a product or service is seen as a necessity to belong to the group.
- (Adapted from Dos Santos (2013b:172)).

#### **2.3.4.2 *Family and households***

A family is referred to as the basic unit of society which comprises individuals who function together, and who are related by blood, marriage or adoption (Mpinganjira, 2013b). Four types of family are dominant, namely, the married or unmarried couple, the nuclear family, the extended family, and the single-parent family. The married or unmarried couple comprises couples (heterosexual or homosexual) who have not yet begun a family; who do not intend to start a family; or whose children have already left home. A nuclear family will typically comprise a married couple and their children, while an extended family refers to the nuclear family and the additional relatives, be it grandparents, in-laws, aunts, uncles or cousins, who may or may not reside under the same roof (Mpinganjira, 2013b; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015; Schiffman et al., 2017). The final type of family is that of the single-parent family, which comprises a single parent and their children.

Households, on the other hand, refer to a group of people, who may or may not be related, that reside in the same housing unit (Mpinganjira, 2013b). A household can be classified as either a family household or a non-family household as shown in Figure 2.6.



**Figure 2.6: Different household types. (Adapted from Mpinganjira, 2013b:220).**

Regardless of its composition, a family fulfils a number of supportive roles for an individual, including the provision of economic well-being and emotional support for its members, socialisation, and lifestyle support (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015), and is a highly influential factor on an individual's buying behaviour. For example, if one family member has a high interest in cycling, it may influence the other family members to take up the activity. If this is the case, the family members will then support one another and encourage one another to do their best and achieve their cycling goals.

An important factor relating to the role of family in consumer behaviour is the position of the family unit in the family life cycle. The family life cycle, provides an indication of the progression a family will go through over time (Schiffman et al., 2017) and includes five stages, namely, bachelorhood, honeymoon, parenthood, post-parenthood, and solitary survivor (Mpinganjira 2013b). The basic premise of these stages, as well as their consumption behaviour, is shown in Figure 2.7.

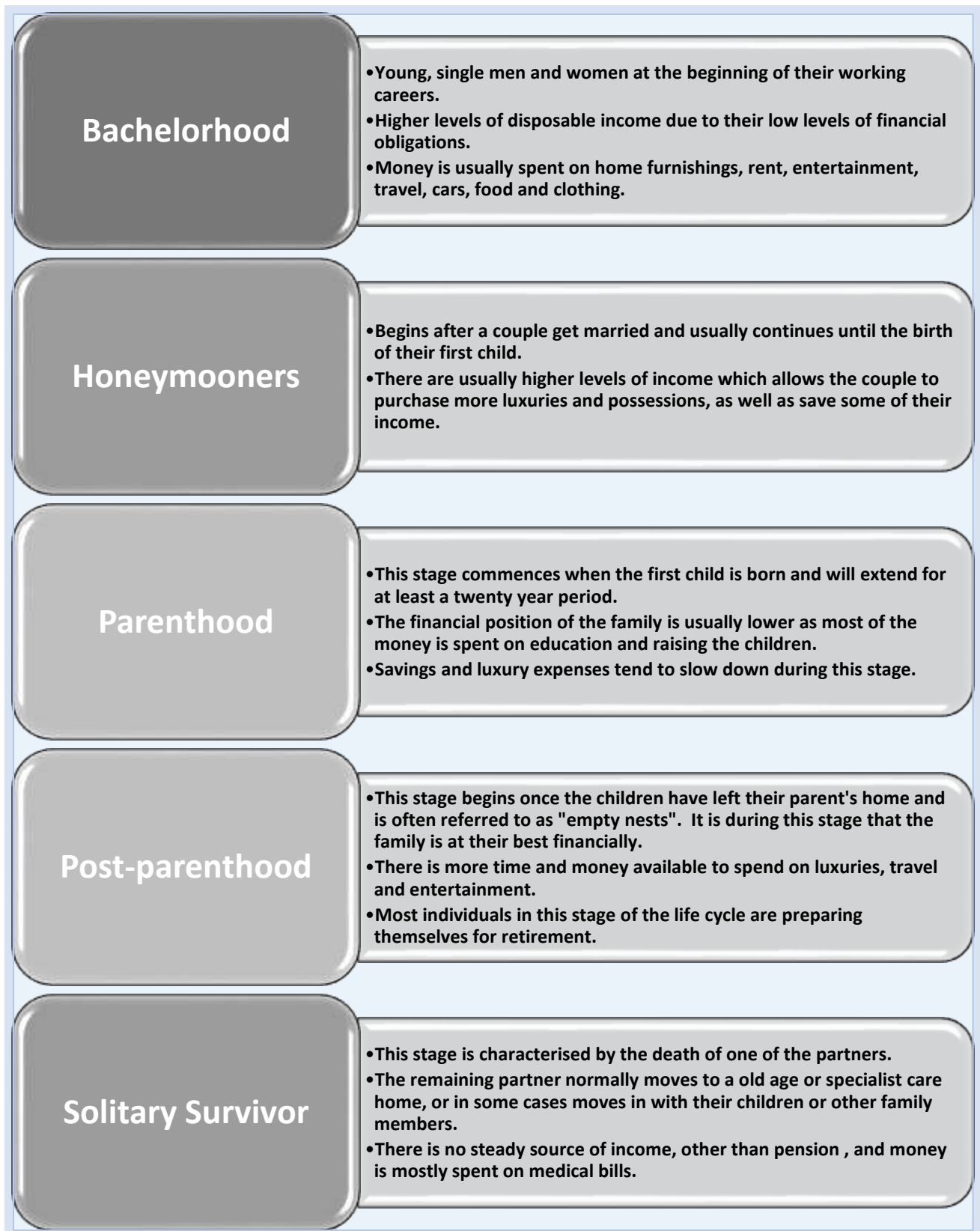


Figure 2.7: The stages in the family life cycle. (Adapted from Mpinganjira, 2013b; Schiffman et al., 2017).

As is evident in Figure 2.7, the amount of disposable income and the priorities of the families, differ throughout each stage of the family life cycle. This may have an effect on gym membership, for example, as many people perceive gym memberships as a “luxury” expense that they might cut from their budget when under financial constraint.

As individuals interact outside of their family unit, they compare their lives and decisions with those of other families and groups. This leads to the identification of different social classes. The influence of social class on a consumer’s behaviour will be highlighted in the section that follows.

### **2.3.4.3 Social class and status**

Social class is defined by the *Business Dictionary* (2018) as the “status hierarchy in which individuals are grouped based on the esteem and prestige they acquired through economic success and accumulation of wealth.” Social class assists organisations with the segmentation of its consumers, as it provides an indication of where consumers shop, what type of shops they visit, and what types of purchases they will make (Dos Santos, 2013b).

Typically, these classes include the lower class, the working class, the middle class, the upper class, and the affluent class, depending on the level of wealth and the standard of living of the individuals. Each class has a similar social standing, with each member having a similar occupation, income level, and lifestyle (Solomon, 2013).

An individual can be placed in a certain social class based on their level of education, occupation, lifestyle standards, hobbies, and general income, among others. An individual’s social class, and especially their available income, will play an important role when deciding on whether to join a gym or not. Virgin Active in South Africa, for example, expanded their service offering to cater for different target markets with certain social class characteristics and income levels by offering different gyms and gym experiences as shown in Table 2.2 below.

**Table 2.3: Virgin Active gym options.**

Option	Description	Included	Price
<b>Virgin Active Red</b>	A no frills or fuss, no-holds kind of gym. Individuals come to train hard on the latest equipment, get all the information and workouts they will need to succeed, and push themselves to the limits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latest gym equipment</li> <li>• Free workout plans</li> <li>• Over 40 group training classes per week</li> <li>• Revolutionary ICG bikes (a brand of spinning bikes) on the training floor and in the Virtual Ride Studio</li> <li>• Virtual Training Zones</li> <li>• Free capped Internet &amp; Wi-Fi</li> </ul>	From R199 per month
<b>Virgin Active Health Clubs</b>	Virgin Active Health Clubs come with just what individuals need to climb a mountain, run a marathon, or just raise a healthy, active family. The clubs have state-of-the-art equipment, the latest in group training, heated lap pools, and Club-V for the kids, among others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Premium training equipment</li> <li>• Innovative group training classes</li> <li>• Functional training areas</li> <li>• Heated lap and leisure pool</li> <li>• Steam rooms and saunas</li> <li>• Club-V for kids</li> <li>• Free capped Internet and Wi-Fi</li> </ul>	From R225 per month
<b>Virgin Active Collection</b>	The Virgin Active Collection is a collection of luxury health clubs. Here, not only do members have access to state-of-the-art training equipment, but also to the Collection Concierge who caters to the members' every need, providing them with a personalised and inspired wellness experience designed to help members reach their fitness goals in absolute luxury.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International reciprocity - train in any Collection Club worldwide</li> <li>• Superior training and wellness experience in an iconic location</li> <li>• State-of-the-art strength and cardio equipment</li> <li>• Free uncapped Internet and Wi-Fi</li> <li>• Shoeshine Bar</li> <li>• Boardroom facilities</li> </ul>	From R1 250 per month

**Source: Virgin Active (2018).**

Some individuals simply cannot afford to pay the membership fees every month, while others may opt to join the most luxurious and expensive gym on offer. As seen in this example, social class tends to bring about a certain level of prestige and status for its members. This status is influenced by one's wealth, social esteem and power, and allows members to feel equal to, inferior to or superior to other individuals (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015; Schiffman et al., 2017). In other

words, the individual who cannot afford a gym membership may feel inferior to the person attending the luxury gym.

#### **2.3.4.4 Culture and subculture**

Culture is an important and dynamic influence on consumer behaviour as it helps to shape the values and norms of individuals (Maree, 2013). Culture can be referred to as the “personality of society” as it is the accumulation of traditions, norms, rituals, and meanings that are shared among individuals (Solomon, 2013). Culture outlines an individual’s personal behaviours, perceptions, and dispositions (East, Wright & Vanhuele, 2014), and has an influence on the products an individual will purchase, and how and when they will make these purchases (McIntee, 2014).

Every nation or community has its own unique culture. A nation’s culture can be classified as individualist or collectivist. Individualism refers to each member valuing self-reliance and self-interest, and satisfying one’s own needs (Maree, 2013; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Collectivism, in comparison, involves protecting the interests of the group and placing emphasis on the well-being of the group in general over individual well-being (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). According to a worldwide study conducted by Hofstede (2012), South Africa is mostly classified as an individualist society in that South Africans place a higher preference on their personal needs and those of their immediate families, rather than the needs of society in general.

The South African culture, however, cannot be described as purely individualistic. Researchers state that the South African culture is more accurately described in terms of two cultural outlooks, namely Afrocentricity and Eurocentricity (Rousseau, 2007c; Maree, 2013). Afrocentricity refers to the shared group orientation that focuses on *Ubuntu*, supportiveness and enjoying and living life, while Eurocentricity is more concerned with individualism, materialism, and achievement, and is more task-oriented (Rousseau, 2007c). The outlook that an individual would follow is dependent on that individual’s situation and circumstances.

Within a culture, one would find smaller distinct segments or sub-cultures (Maree, 2013). Each individual belongs to a number of sub-cultures that will have an influence on their buying behaviour. These can include age, ethnicity, race, religion, or lifestyle (Solomon, 2013). Each sub-culture may have different requirements and expectations regarding a fitness centre. For example, in their study on exercise motivation and barriers, Louw, van Biljon and Mugandani (2012) found that appearance and body-related concerns were important motives to exercise for



the participants who were under 25 years of age. Controlling one's weight was more important for those in the 35-44 years age group, and stress management was important for those individuals who were older than 44 years.

### **2.3.5 Personal and market characteristics influencing consumer behaviour**

As shown in Figure 2.1, the personal characteristics of the consumer, as well as those of the market, will have an impact on the decision-making and buying behaviour of the consumer. Personal characteristics refer to the physiological and biological traits that an individual is born with, or which develop throughout their lives (Roberts-Lombard & Brijball Parumasur, 2017). This can include a consumer's gender, race, or age, among other factors.

The characteristics of the market refer to the physical attributes of the market, and include aspects such as the climate, the economy, or technology. These aspects are discussed in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

## **2.4 CONSUMER SATISFACTION, RETENTION AND LOYALTY**

In the previous section, the decision-making role of consumers was discussed as well as the factors that influence consumer behaviour and decision-making. By understanding these factors, an organisation can be in a better standing to ensure that their consumers are satisfied and to attract and retain loyal consumers. The concepts of consumer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention will be discussed in this section.

### **2.4.1 Consumer satisfaction**

Consumer satisfaction is defined by Luo and Battacharya (2006:3) as the consumer's "evaluation of the total consumption and purchasing experience." Schiffman et al. (2017:10) further define consumer satisfaction as the "consumer's perception of a service or product in relation to his or her expectations". If this experience results in a feeling of fulfilment, the consumer will be satisfied, however, if the consumer is unfulfilled, he or she will be dissatisfied (Mackay, Petzer & Moster, 2014). Satisfaction is, therefore, a consumer's attitude towards a product that has met

or exceeded his or her expectations (East, Wright & Vanhuele, 2014; Jooste, 2014; Lamb et al., 2015).

Consumer satisfaction is critical for the survival of an organisation as a satisfied consumer is more likely to purchase the product or service again in the future, and is likely to inform other people of his or her experience (Peter & Olson, 2010). This will result in the promotion of the organisation, or its products, and will reduce the costs involved in attracting new customers (Taki, Mirghafoori & Sharifabadi, 2015). A satisfied consumer is likely to remain a consumer, and will make repeat purchases and provide referrals (Nyadzayo & Roberts-Lombard, 2010). For example, a satisfied consumer at a gym will likely renew his or her membership and make use of the facilities more frequently. That consumer is also likely to recommend the gym to friends or family, which may lead to new consumers joining the gym, thus resulting in an increase in profits. A dissatisfied consumer, on the other hand, can be dangerous for the organisation.

If a consumer's expectations are not met, that consumer will become dissatisfied. Dissatisfied consumers will often complain to such authorities as an Ombudsman or governing body, and to the local media or social media. In addition, they are likely to cease purchasing the organisation's products and may instead choose to support a competitor. Furthermore, today's technology and the popularity of social media means that a dissatisfied consumer has access to ways and means of hurting an organisation's reputation or a brand with a single post on social media (Lamb et al., 2015). Table 2.3 shows the number of South African accounts on the various social media platforms for 2015. These figures have grown substantially over the years and illustrate the popularity of social media in South Africa. One negative post about a gym, or any other organisation, on any social media platform can be seen by quite a large number of people per day, which may result in a loss of the brand's reputation, a loss of existing and future consumers, and ultimately a loss of profits for that organisation.

**Table 2.4: Number of South African users per social media platform for 2015.**

<b>Social media platform</b>	<b>Number of active South African accounts in 2015</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	11.8 million
<b>YouTube</b>	7.2 million
<b>Instagram</b>	1.1 million
<b>Twitter</b>	6.6 million
<b>LinkedIn</b>	3.8 million

**Source: WorldWideWorx and Fuseware (2015).**

Losing a consumer due to dissatisfaction means the loss of a lifetime of purchases that could have been made (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). It is, therefore, important for any organisation to ensure that their consumers are satisfied as this the key to consumer retention and loyalty.

### **2.4.2 Consumer retention and loyalty**

Consumer retention involves creating long-term consumer relationships from individual consumer transactions (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). In other words, it refers to an organisation retaining its current consumers. This can be achieved by increasing consumer satisfaction, and is important for an organisation as it costs less to retain a consumer than it does to acquire a new consumer (East, Wright & Vanhuele, 2014). A satisfied consumer will create a strong and durable relationship with an organisation, which will lead to consumer loyalty and increased profitability (Petzer, Steyn & Mostert, 2009).

However, not all satisfied consumers are necessarily loyal consumers. Consumer loyalty comes as a result of an organisation exceeding a consumer's expectations to the point where a consumer will need little incentive to make repeat purchases (Ferrell & Hartline, 2014; East, Wright & Vanhuele, 2014). Chen (2015) defines consumer loyalty as the loyal attitude and behaviour of a consumer towards an organisation, despite the availability of alternative products by competitors. These behaviours and attitudes are created and assessed over a period of time (van Vuuren, Roberts-Lombard & van Tonder, 2012) and will result in the consumer being genuinely committed to the organisation (Roberts-Lombard & Brijball Parumasur, 2017).

## **2.5 MARKET SEGMENTATION, TARGETING, POSITIONING, AND CONSUMER TYPOLOGIES**

Increasing consumer satisfaction, retention, and loyalty are important aspects that an organisation must keep in mind if it wishes to remain competitive. Two methods of achieving this are through market segmentation, targeting and positioning, as well as through the development of consumer typologies. Once the market has been successfully segmented, an organisation can develop various consumer typologies to better understand the needs of their consumers. These concepts will be discussed in the sections that follow.

### **2.5.1 Market segmentation, targeting and positioning**

As mentioned, a market is a collective of individual consumers each with varying needs and desires that require satisfaction. These consumers will differ in terms of their locations, attitudes, and practices (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). One way in which an organisation can understand these needs and provide the means for satisfying these needs, is through market segmentation.

Market segmentation is defined by Ferrell and Hartline (2014:129) as “the process of dividing the total market for a product into smaller, homogenous segments”, in which the members of each segment have similar tastes, needs or desires. The reasoning behind this is that it is improbable to think that an organisation can satisfy all the needs of a broad market of consumers. It is far more effective for an organisation to identify, and focus on, those segments which it can best serve (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Furthermore, segmentation allows the organisation to better focus their resources and identify market opportunities, and will assist the organisation in better understanding the needs of their consumers (Epetimehin, 2011; Mpinganjira, 2013c).

A market can be segmented in various ways. These can include segmenting a market based on the demographics, geographic location, or psychographics of the consumers; or through how the product is used, or the perceived benefits of the products (Kotler & Keller, 2012; Mpinganjira, 2013c; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). Organisations, and in this case, fitness centres, can choose to segment their markets based on any number of these attributes. Curves Gym, for example is segmented mainly according to demographics in that they only target women, and especially middle-aged women who are new to exercise or who are uncomfortable with joining a conventional fitness centre (Mascott, 2005). However, Curves also segments according to geographic location in that the fitness centres are based in major cities and shopping centres around the country. This means that consumers need not travel far in order to find a Curves Gym. This concept is commonly referred to as geo-demographic segmentation (Mpinganjira, 2013c).

Pursuing those segments which the organisation has recognised as being prospective consumers is referred to as targeting (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015). This results in the identification of a specific target market which the organisation hopes to serve (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013). Once a segment has been targeted, the organisation then needs to create a specific image or identity for its products in the minds of the prospective consumers. This is referred to as the positioning of the product or service on offer (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015) and aims to make the product stand out from its competitors (Armstrong & Kotler, 2013).

The Curves Gym franchise is an example of a fitness centre that has embraced market segmentation, targeting and positioning. They achieved this by creating an exclusively female fitness centre that offers weight loss, fitness and nutrition solutions specifically designed to suit the needs of a woman (Curves, 2015). The routine is 30 minutes long and comprises different machines designed to suit a woman's smaller frame, and to cover aspects such as aerobics, cardio and strength training (Mascott, 2005). This has helped to distinguish Curves from the regular fitness centres.

Planet Fitness has also effectively embraced market segmentation, targeting and positioning. Some of the clubs now boast a "ladies only" training area, offering the latest equipment specifically designed for a woman's body. In addition, Planet Fitness also offers Cross Training sessions, Zumba, free training for children between the ages of 13 and 18, and indoor running tracks, all of which cater for the needs of their various consumer segments (Planet Fitness, 2015).

## **2.5.2 Consumer typologies**

Once a chosen market has been identified and segmented, an organisation can begin to develop typologies and groupings in order to gain a better understanding of the needs of their consumers (Wahyuningsih & Tanamal, 2008). An organisation can group certain consumers together based on the motives and criteria of the individual consumers for selecting a particular product or service (Koszevska, 2013). These groupings are known as consumer typologies and can be used by an organisation to identify and understand their consumers' expectations regarding the organisation or its products (Quick, 2000), and to assist the organisation to adapt their product or service offerings to best satisfy these expectations. Furthermore, developing typologies can help an organisation to predict buyer behaviour (East, Wright & Vanhuele, 2014), and to determine which type of consumer is likely to be dissatisfied (Athanasopoulou et al., 2011).

Various consumer typologies across different industries have been documented in a number of research papers. For example, in their study, Athanasopoulou et al. (2011) classified their participants as either sports savvy, health-orientated, athletic or pressured, based on their reasons for attending a fitness centre. Another example is the jogging behaviour of the participants in the study by Rohm, Milne and McDonald (2006) in which the consumers were classified as healthy joggers, actualised athletes, social competitors or devotees. Consumer typologies are, however, not restricted to just the sporting industry. East, Wright and Vanhuele (2014) mention that retail shoppers can be classified as store-loyal customers, heavy customers,

or compulsive shoppers. A further example was the development of a consumer typology for wine consumers in Switzerland. In the study, Brunner and Siegrist (2011) identified six distinct categories of wine drinker ranging from the price conscious drinkers and prestige drinkers, to the entertainment and social drinkers.

Regardless of how the organisation chooses to group its consumers, consumer typologies play an important role in helping the organisation to understand the behaviour of its consumers. Through the development of consumer typologies, an organisation is in a better position to customise their products and services to meet the different needs of their consumers. In addition, consumer typologies will provide the organisation with more information regarding which aspects of their product or service are deemed important by the different groups of consumers. This will aid in increasing consumer satisfaction and retention, and the creation of long-term consumer relationships (Athanasopoulou et al., 2011). Developing a consumer typology for health and fitness centres is the primary aim of this research. The final typology will be discussed in Chapter Six of this dissertation.

In this section, the concepts of market segmentation, targeting and positioning were discussed, and a discussion on consumer typologies was provided. The next section will focus on consumer behaviour in sports and sporting activities.

## **2.6 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN SPORTS AND SPORTING ACTIVITIES**

Billions of people around the world partake in sports, attend sporting events as spectators, watch sports on television, or purchase sporting merchandise (Trail, 2016). To be successful in the sport and fitness industry, it is important that a sporting organisation knows who its consumers are and what their behaviours are.

Sport consumer behaviour is concerned with the experience of the individual, whether this be watching or partaking in a sporting event, and the process involved when that individual selects, uses, and disposes of sport-related products or services (Funk, 2008). People get involved in sports and physical activity for a number of reasons, ranging from fun, fitness, and skill development, to friendship, achievement, and enjoyment (Ajowi, Rintaugu, Toriola & Nongogo, 2017 (hereinafter Ajowi et al., 2017)), and often they will become psychologically and emotionally involved in their sports (Eagleman, Wright & Green, 2014).

As stated in the definition, sport consumers are those individuals who watch (spectators) or partake (participants) in a sporting event. Each of these categories of consumer has different motivators for participating in or observing a sporting event. For the participants, the desire to compete, win, and be the best are the key motivators for partaking in sports and sporting events (Eagleman, Wright & Green, 2014). The spectators, on the other hand, are motivated more by psychological aspects. They are driven by the drama, excitement, anticipation, and uncertainty that sport presents, as well as the aesthetic appeal of the sport. Furthermore, many spectators view sport as a distraction from the boredom and stress of their everyday lives, and use sport to fulfil their need for belonging (Eagleman, Wright & Green, 2014). Regardless of whether they are participants or spectators, sport consumers display interesting characteristics and behaviours, and the desire to understand this behaviour is a long standing goal for anyone in the sporting industry (Stewart, Smith & Nicholson, 2003), including health and fitness clubs.

The health and fitness industry is a rapidly growing and highly competitive industry worldwide (Afthinos, Theodoakis & Nassis, 2005). Like most industries, health and fitness centres are faced with constant changes in consumer needs, demographics and technologies (Theodoridis & Chatzipanagiotou, 2009), all of which have an effect on the behaviour of the consumers. In addition, all consumers have different expectations and requirements which the fitness centre will need to take into consideration if they wish to satisfy and retain their consumers.

Consumers join a fitness centre for any number of reasons ranging from general health and well-being, to fitness, losing weight, and for self-esteem reasons (Louw, van Biljon & Mugandani, 2012). Furthermore, socialisation, stress reduction, and doctor's recommendations are also noted reasons for joining a gym or fitness centre (van Niekerk, 2010; Athanasopoulou et al., 2011). These motives differ between men and women, and even from person to person.

In the study conducted by Louw, van Biljon and Mugandani (2012), the female participants ranked general health, maintain fitness, control weight, and appearance as the top four reasons for engaging in exercise, whereas men ranked general health, maintain fitness, increase strength and endurance, and feel good as their top four reasons. One reason why appearance ranks high for women could be the pressure from society to have the ideal body type (Grossbard, Lee, Neighbors & Larimer, 2009 (hereinafter Grossbard et al., 2009)). It is for this, and many other reasons, that more and more men and women are taking the decision to join a health and fitness centre and to engage in sporting activities. Modern day gyms and fitness centres, as well as the environment in which they operate, are further discussed in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

## **2.7 CONCLUSION**

This concludes the chapter on consumer behaviour. The purpose of this chapter was to provide an overview of consumer behaviour, as the consumer behaviour of people who attend a gym is the primary focus of this study. This chapter commenced with a discussion of the importance of a consumer, which included providing definitions for consumers and consumer behaviour. The consumer as a decision-maker and problem solver was then explored, which comprised an in-depth discussion on the consumer decision-making process and the factors that influence consumer decision-making. The researcher then proceeded to explain the importance of consumer satisfaction, retention, and loyalty, and how these aspects can be increased through market segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Consumer typologies, the primary objective of this study, were then discussed. The chapter concluded with a discussion on the consumer behaviour in sport and sporting activities, as this is the industry to which health and fitness centres belong. In the next chapter, the focus will be on the sport industry, which includes health and fitness centres, and the business environment in which they operate.



# **CHAPTER 3**

## **THE SOUTH AFRICAN SPORT AND EXERCISE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Sport is a universal human phenomenon or activity, and is a big business opportunity that affects the economic and political life of cities and countries (Kyle, 2015). According to the South African Sport and Recreation White Paper (Republic of South Africa. Department: Sport and Recreation, 2013), sport is defined as any physical activity, undertaken in a structured or unstructured environment, for the purposes of declaring a winner, improving physical health, relaxation, or for personal satisfaction. The White Paper further defines recreation as the voluntary involvement in an activity in order to improve one's skills, well-being, or overall health. Keeping these definitions in mind, this chapter will focus on the South African sport and exercise business environment. This chapter will commence with a brief look at the history of sports and exercise, before focusing specifically on the business environment of exercise organisations, such as health and fitness centres.

### **3.2 A BRIEF HISTORY OF SPORT AND EXERCISE**

In ancient times, sport was as significant and relevant as it is today (Kyle, 2015). The concept of physical exercise originates from the time when early man had to compete with animal predators in hostile habitats for food and survival. As human beings evolved and cities began to form, warfare became a more common occurrence. During times of war, individual soldiers were required to undergo rigorous and demanding training schedules to prepare them for success in combat (Mechikoff & Estes, 2006). Over time, many of these training programmes evolved into popular sports we still know today.

However, the core concepts of physical fitness, play, athletic ability, and competition were as much an integral cultural component of ancient civilisations as they are today (Mechikoff & Estes, 2006). In this section, a brief history of sport, focusing specifically on individual sport and exercise, will be discussed.

### **3.2.1 Ancient Greece and the Ancient and Modern Olympic Games**

Athletic competition in Ancient Greece was hardly harmless fun or carefree play, instead, it was seen as a duty and obligation (Kyle, 2015). The ancient Greeks perceived their gods to be “perfect physical specimens” and sought to resemble them through athletic ability and physical beauty (Mechikoff & Estes, 2006:59). The Greeks loved their sports, but combat sports, such as wrestling or boxing, were revered as they displayed an athlete’s bravery, determination and power; characteristics which were necessary and valuable for fighters and soldiers (Jennings, 2016). With very few rules and restrictions, these combat matches could only end by means of a knockout, submission, or death, with the first two options being considered dishonourable (Jennings, 2016). However, as much as the Greeks enjoyed these bloodbaths, the more beautiful side of sport and athleticism, namely the pride and spectacle of the Olympic Games was also appreciated.

#### **3.2.1.1 The Ancient Olympic Games**

The Ancient Olympic Games were a source of pride and identity for the Greek nation, and were held every four years from 776 B.C. until approximately 393 A.D. (Kyle, 2015; Olympic.org, 2015; Kyle, 2017). The Games were held at Olympia and were closely linked to the religious festivities honouring the Greek God, Zeus (Olympic.org, 2015). The events were only open to Greek men and their legitimate sons, and only free men – as opposed to slaves - could partake (Kyle, 2015).

The initial Games comprised of only one event, namely the *Stade* or 200-metre footrace. Over time, however, more events were added including a 370 metre sprint, a 4800 metre “long run”, wrestling, pentathlon, jumping, throwing the discus, chariot races, and boxing (Mechikoff & Estes, 2006; Olympic.org, 2015). This resulted in the Games becoming a five day event, with half the time devoted to competition and the other half devoted to religious activities (Mechikoff & Estes, 2006). Over time, the religious aspect of the Games faded out, resulting in the Modern Olympic Games that are held today, which focus purely on competition and fame for the athletes.

The competition aspect of the games, and the fame it brought for the athletes, is not a new concept. The male athletes of Ancient Greece were placed under a great deal of pressure, not only to compete at the Games, but also to win, with many seeing the participation in the Games as a sense of male duty and preparation for times of warfare (Kyle, 2015). The high-level athletes of Ancient Greece did not view these sporting activities as fun or play. These athletes invested a lot

of time and effort into training at the stadiums, or gymnasia, in the hopes of one day achieving the status of hero. While training every day was a necessity for the individual athletes, the importance of having leisure time, the financial resources to compete in the games, and a specialised diet, were also understood (Kyle, 2015), all of which are still crucial to the success of an athlete today.

### **3.2.1.2    *The Modern Olympic Games***

The Modern Olympic Games bring together top-class athletes from around the world to participate in a two-week showcase of sporting talent. The first Modern Olympic Games took place on April 6, 1896 in Athens, and saw 241 athletes from 14 different countries compete in 43 events (Olympic.org, 2017b). Only first place athletes received a medal, with second and third place medals featuring from the third Olympiad onwards (History.com, 2017). As with the Ancient Games, only men participated in the first event. However, at the second Olympiad in Paris in 1900, 22 of the 997 athletes were female participants (History.com, 2017). Since then, the Games have grown in popularity and are now held every four years in different cities around the world. The 2016 Summer Games held in Rio, saw 11238 athletes from 207 countries compete in 306 different events (Olympic.org, 2017c). These events included a variety of disciplines ranging from track and field events and swimming, to cycling, wrestling, rowing, and martial arts, among others. The Rio Games awarded more than 900 medals to participants (306 events across 34 sporting disciplines). This shows the popularity of the Games and it is the ultimate dream of any professional athlete to qualify to compete.

The less popular Winter Games, which are also held every four years, but with two years between them and the Summer Games, have also attracted their fair share of attention. The 2018 Winter Games held in PyeongChang, South Korea, saw 2952 athletes from 92 different countries compete for glory in 102 events across 15 different sports (McCluskey, 2018). In comparison with the Summer Games, the Winter Games include events such as curling, skiing, snowboarding, figure skating, and ice hockey, among others.

A fairly new version of the modern Olympic Games is that of the Youth Olympics. The Youth Games were introduced in 2010 as a way of celebrating talented athletes between the ages of 15 and 18 years (Olympic.org, 2017d). The Youth Games have a summer and winter version, which alternate every two years. The young athletes partake in many of the same events as their adult counterparts such as athletics, cycling and gymnastics. However, the athletes also compete in

events such as dance, roller sports and climbing, which do not feature in the normal Summer Games (Olympic.org, 2017d).

### **3.2.2 The Ancient Romans**

Much like their Ancient Greek counterparts, the Ancient Romans were involved in bloodbaths and games of warfare, power and oppression (Kyle, 2015). For the Ancient Romans, sport was a practical activity that aided in military development and was a popular form of entertainment (Delaney & Madigan, 2015). The Ancient Roman rulers used sports as a means of preventing boredom among their people, as they believed that if their citizens were bored, they would revolt (Mechikoff & Estes, 2006).

The Ancient Roman population thrived on the brutal spectacles of man against man, and man against beast, and combats were staged with the intention of entertaining the spectators. The events normally began with a chariot race or animal fights. Between the races, the chariot riders would entertain the crowds with equestrian feats, such as jumping from one horse to another (Mechikoff & Estes, 2006; Kyle, 2017). By far the most popular events for the Ancient Romans were the gladiator combats, staged naval combats, and the outright slaughter of criminals and Christians (Mechikoff & Estes, 2006).

More often than not, these spectacles saw gladiators (usually slaves or criminals, and in later years, volunteers) facing other gladiators, or in some cases wild animals, in matches that often ended in death. Fame, glory, and the possibility of freedom, awaited the victor who survived the battle or many battles.

### **3.2.3 The Ancient Egyptians**

In Ancient Egypt, athletic and sporting events were popular among the nobles and soldiers, who often took part in events such as running, dancing, acrobatics, archery, and ball or board games (Kyle, 2015). While sports in Ancient Greece and Rome focused mainly on the individual, Ancient Egypt had a number of team-based sporting events, such as variations of field hockey, tug of war and rowing (Ancient Egypt Online, n.d.). Archery was a common sporting event, although it was mainly associated with the pharaohs and royalty (Mark, 2017). Mark (2017) further mentions that it was important for a pharaoh to remain fit as he or she would partake in the Heb-Sed festival, a

course much like a modern day obstacle course, held after the first 30 years of his or her reign. Unlike Ancient Greece and Rome where it was frowned upon for royalty to partake in the events, sporting events were a common pastime for the rulers of Ancient Egypt.

The civilisations mentioned above were by no means the only ones to partake in sporting events. But to report on all the ancient civilisations is not the focus of this dissertation. It is important, however, to understand a basic history of sport and physical training so that one has an idea of how it has adapted and changed to the sport and physical training we know today.

### 3.2.4 Timeline of the history of sport

Sport, as we know it, has come a long way since its humble beginnings. Table 3.1 below presents a timeline of some of the more significant events throughout the history of sport, and especially sport in South Africa.

**Table 3.1: Timeline of the history of sport.**

Year	Event
<b>5000 – 300 BC</b>	A soccer-type game was played by the Chinese.
<b>776 BC</b>	The first Ancient Olympic Games were held in Athens, Greece.
<b>1200</b>	Variations of soccer were played throughout Europe.
<b>1500s</b>	A game played on the coast of Scotland became the origin for golf.
<b>1550</b>	Early variations of tennis were played in Europe.
<b>1845</b>	The rules of rugby were formalised in England.
<b>1848</b>	The rules of soccer were established at Cambridge University in England.
<b>1860</b>	The first British Open Golf tournament was held.
<b>1873</b>	The first version of the “front crawl” (freestyle) swimming technique was introduced in England.
<b>1877</b>	The first Wimbledon tennis event and the first cricket test match were held.
<b>1887</b>	The first year women could compete in the US tennis championships.
<b>1889</b>	The first cricket test match in South Africa was played at Newlands Stadium in Cape Town.
<b>1896</b>	The first Modern Olympic Games were held in Athens, Greece.

<b>1936</b>	Jack LaLanne opened the first health club in California
<b>1959</b>	The South African, Gary Player, won the British Open golf tournament.
<b>1964</b>	South Africa was banned from participating in the Olympic Games until 1992 due to its apartheid practices.
<b>1965</b>	12-year-old, Karen Muir, a swimmer from Kimberley, South Africa, broke the world-record in backstroke, becoming the youngest world-record holder in any sport.
<b>1974</b>	South Africa won the Davis Cup tennis tournament. In the same year, the first Midmar Mile swimming event was held in South Africa.
<b>1978</b>	The first South African Cape Argus Cycle Tour was held.
<b>1979</b>	Jody Scheckter from East London became the first South African to be crowned the Formula One racing champion.
<b>1995</b>	The South African Springboks rugby team won the Rugby World Cup final.
<b>2002</b>	South African, Natalie Du Toit, an amputee, qualified for the 800m freestyle swimming event at the Commonwealth Games.
<b>2007</b>	The Blue Bulls won the Super 14 rugby tournament, the first South African team to accomplish this. In addition, the Springboks won the Rugby World Cup for the second time.
<b>2008</b>	Natalie Du Toit became the first disabled athlete to compete in the Olympic Games, finishing 16 <sup>th</sup> in the 10km open water swimming event.
<b>2009</b>	The Indian Premier League's 20/20 cricket tournament started in South Africa.
<b>2010</b>	South Africa becomes the first African country to host the FIFA Soccer World Cup.
<b>2012</b>	Lance Armstrong was stripped of his seven Tour de France titles and was banned from cycling events for life for taking performance-enhancing drugs.
<b>2014</b>	The first ever Invictus Games were held in London. This is an annual multi-sport event intended for wounded and disabled soldiers.
<b>2016</b>	South African athlete, Wade van Niekerk, broke the world record for the men's 400m. Ireland's rugby team beat the New Zealand "All Blacks" rugby team for the first time in 111 years.
<b>2017</b>	South African, Gift Ngophe, made his Major League Baseball debut for the Pittsburgh Pirates. The Blitzboks (South African seven-a-side rugby team) were crowned the World Series Champions in rugby. Swimmer, Chad Le Clos finished top of the FINA World Cup standings for 2017, becoming the first competitor to win the title four times. Kevin Anderson became the first South African to reach the finals of the US Tennis Open since 1985.
<b>2018</b>	The Springboks beat New Zealand in Wellington for the first time since 2007. The Blitzboks won the World Rugby Sevens Series title for the second season in a row. Banyana Banyana (female national soccer team) qualified for the World Cup in 2019, a feat that their male counterparts have not achieved since 1998. Team SA won 37 medals at the Commonwealth Games, finishing in sixth place overall.

**Source: Researcher's own composition of highlights from the following sources: Brand South Africa (2010), Topend Sports (2017); South Africa Travel Online (2017); Burnard (2017); Burnard (2018).**

### 3.2.5 A history of personal fitness and the advent of health and fitness centres

Physical fitness has always been an important aspect in an individual's life, as shown in the previous sections. In prehistoric times (the hunter-gatherer period), having a high level of fitness was important for survival as often prehistoric man had to walk for many days to find food or water (Dalleck & Kravitz, 2002). As time progressed, being ready for battle became one of the primary reasons for maintaining one's physical fitness. Many ancient empires, such as the Romans, Spartans or Persians, built their empires on the strength and physical fitness of their military forces (Becic, 2016). In contrast, the Ancient Chinese Empire recognised the role of physical fitness in preventing certain diseases such as diabetes or heart problems (Becic, 2016).

While humans today are not necessarily driven by “the need to survive”, physical fitness is still seen as paramount to one's health and well-being (Dalleck & Kravitz, 2002; ClubReady Fitness, 2017). People today engage in different physical fitness activities be it through a leisure or competitive sporting activity, or through joining a fitness centre.

The fitness centres of today look vastly different to those of years gone by. The gyms of Ancient Greece were large open air spaces, which vaguely resembled a modern day athletics stadium, and were solely for the use of the Greek men (Smith, 2015). In 1774, the “*Philanthropinum*” was opened in Germany by Johann Bernard Basedow, with a focus on physical exercise and games, and included activities such as running, wrestling, dancing, fencing, and vaulting (Le Corre, 2014). This, together with the start of gymnastics, became the foundation for gyms and physical education curriculums in schools, especially in Europe. The awareness of fitness and physical culture began in America only a number of years later. The first health club was opened in California in 1936 by “health nut”, Jack LaLanne, who also hosted a televised exercise programme from 1951 to 1971, and invented a number of exercise machinery used in health clubs today (Stone, 2004; Clear, 2018). A fellow American, Catharine Beecher, became a strong advocate for the inclusion of physical education, for both boys and girls, in American schools. She developed a form of gymnastics performed to music, known as callisthenics (Le Corre, 2014).

These early forms of gymnastics followed a very functional approach with a primary focus on military preparedness (Le Corre, 2014). This eventually led to the “strong-man” or body builder approach to fitness, where machinery and weights were introduced to the workout routine (Le Corre, 2014). The term body building was first used in 1881, when a staff member of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) developed exercise classes similar to what one would

experience in a modern day gym (ClubReady Fitness, 2017). The first gym with a focus on body building, was opened in 1965 in Venice, California, by Joe Gold and is still in operation today (Luke, 2017).

By the late 1960s, aerobic exercises started gaining popularity as a means of improving one's cardiovascular health (Stone, 2004). By the 1970s and 1980s, aerobic exercise exploded with millions of individuals taking up running and jogging, and activities such as cycling, tennis, resistance training, and aerobic dance programmes all gaining popularity (Stone, 2004). However, it was not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century that fitness centres, as commercial enterprises, made their appearance.

Hippolyte Triat, a strongman-turned-fitness entrepreneur from France, opened the first commercial fitness centres in Brussels and Paris in the late 1840s (Smith, 2015; ClubReady Fitness, 2017). These early fitness centres had light weights and dumbbells, as well as basic equipment associated with modern day gymnastics, such as parallel bars and pommel horses. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, another gym, *London's Institute of Physical Culture*, was opened by Eugene Sandow and focused on free weights and weight training exercises under the supervision of personal trainers (Smith, 2015). These fitness centres adapted and evolved to become the fitness centres that most people are familiar with today.

### **3.3 MODERN DAY HEALTH AND FITNESS CENTRES**

The health and fitness industry worldwide is rapidly growing, with more than 38 000 health and fitness centres open in America alone (IHRSA, 2018). Modern fitness centres have a variety of machinery designed for toning or building muscle and increasing one's physical fitness. Furthermore, health and fitness centres offer a range of cardiovascular, resistance, core stability, and strength exercises to its members (Culture, Art, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority, 2013 (hereinafter CATHSSETA 2013)). It is also common to find a number of group classes (such as spinning, Zumba dance or aerobics classes), a swimming pool and, in some cases, a sauna room on offer in most fitness centres. Some fitness centres may be specialised in that they only focus on weight training, martial arts, or Pilates, for example, or they may cater only to women, such as Curves, or to specific religious groups (Byer, 2016). With more and more people around the world realising the importance of daily exercise, health and fitness centres have grown in popularity (CATHSSETA, 2013).



Approximately 16 percent of the American and 12 percent of the British population belong to a fitness centre (Carter, 2015), and the fitness industry in Europe and North America generates over US\$30 billion annually (Iwuoha, 2015). With the alliance between medical aids and fitness centres, as well as the relatively low monthly fees, health and fitness club membership in South Africa is also growing in popularity (CATHSSETA, 2013).

In South Africa, Virgin Active is the largest chain of health and fitness centres with an estimated 500 000 members in 138 clubs country wide, and 13 new clubs that opened in South Africa in 2016 alone (Business Tech, 2017). Virgin Active currently accounts for between 60 and 70 percent of the total fitness market in South Africa. Other conventional players in the South African fitness market are Planet Fitness with 32 clubs, Zone Fitness with 22 clubs, Viva Gym with seven clubs, and Go Health with five clubs (Business Tech, 2017; Mapumulo, 2017). Other specialist health and fitness centres such as Cross Fit or Curves are also fighting for the attention of the consumers. Curves has 110 clubs throughout South Africa and over four million female members worldwide (Curves, 2015). With more clubs set to open in the coming years, and more members expected to join, it is important to understand the business environment in which these health and fitness clubs operate.

### **3.4 THE SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT OF A HEALTH AND FITNESS ORGANISATION**

The international sporting and fitness industry, to which the South African sport businesses and health and fitness centres belong, generates billions of dollars and has employed millions of people worldwide (Rudansky-Kloppers, Strydom, Bester, Botha, Joubert, Serra, Steynberg & van Eerden, 2015 (hereinafter Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015)). Like all other industries, the health and fitness industry comprises two environments, namely, the internal and the external environments, and their various components as shown in Figure 3.1. Each of these environments will be discussed in the sections that follow.

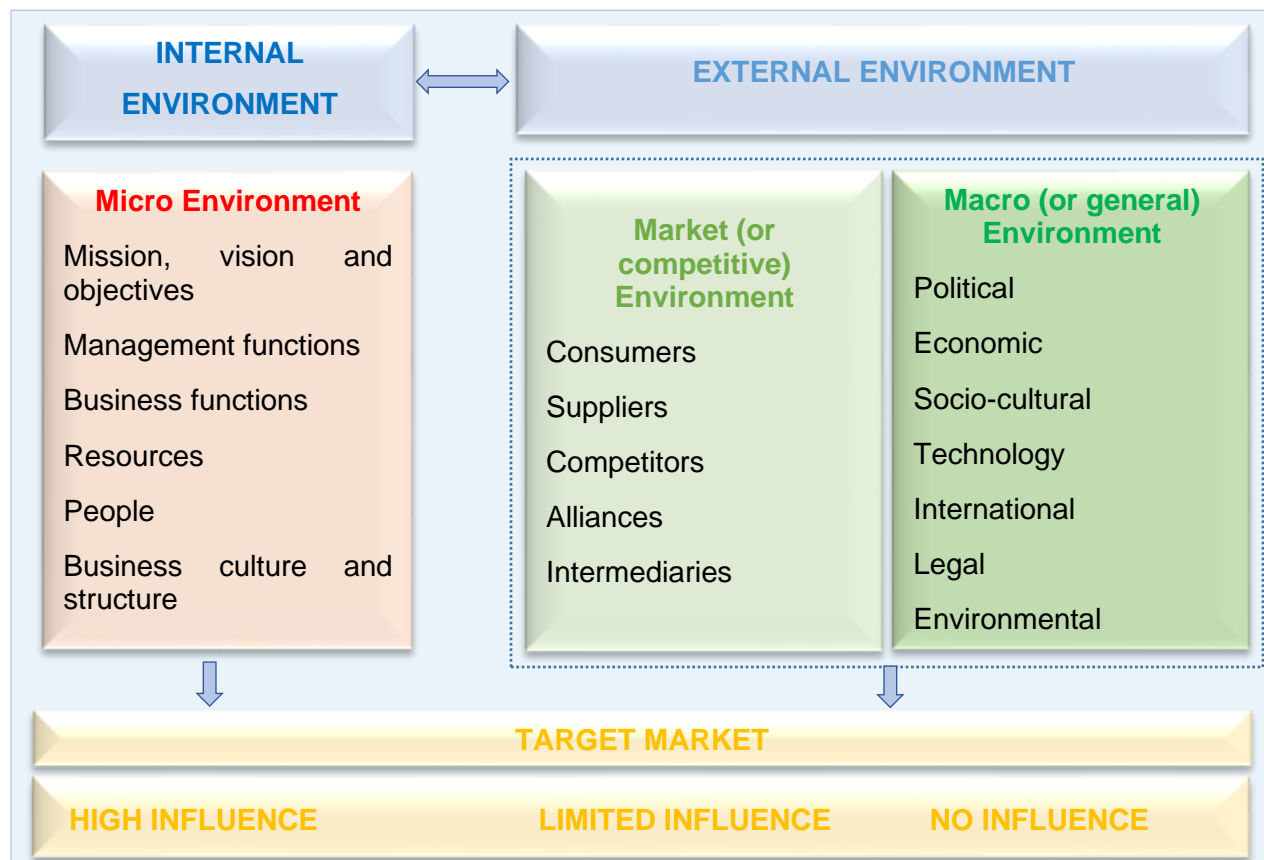
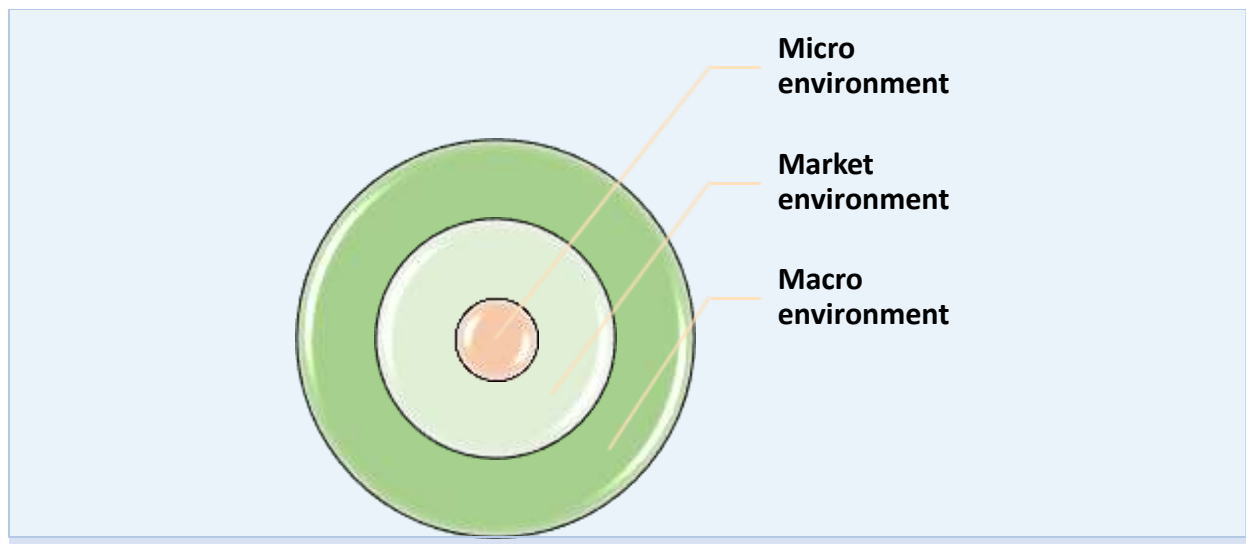


Figure 3.1: The composition of the business environment. (Adapted from Boddy & Paton (2011:78); Lamb et al. (2015:42)).

The business environment can be divided into three components as shown in Figure 3.1, namely the micro, market, and macro environments. As shown in Figure 3.2, the micro environment represents the business itself and is surrounded by both the market and macro environments (the external environments of a business). The micro environment has some influence over the market environment, but no influence over the macro environment. The macro environment, on the other hand, can influence both the micro and market environments (Alsemgeest, Booysen, Bosch, Boschoff, Botha, Cunningham, Henrico, Musengi-Ajulu & Visser, 2017 (hereinafter Alsemgeest et al., 2017)).



**Figure 3.2: The organisational environment of a health and fitness centre. (Source: Researcher's own composition).**

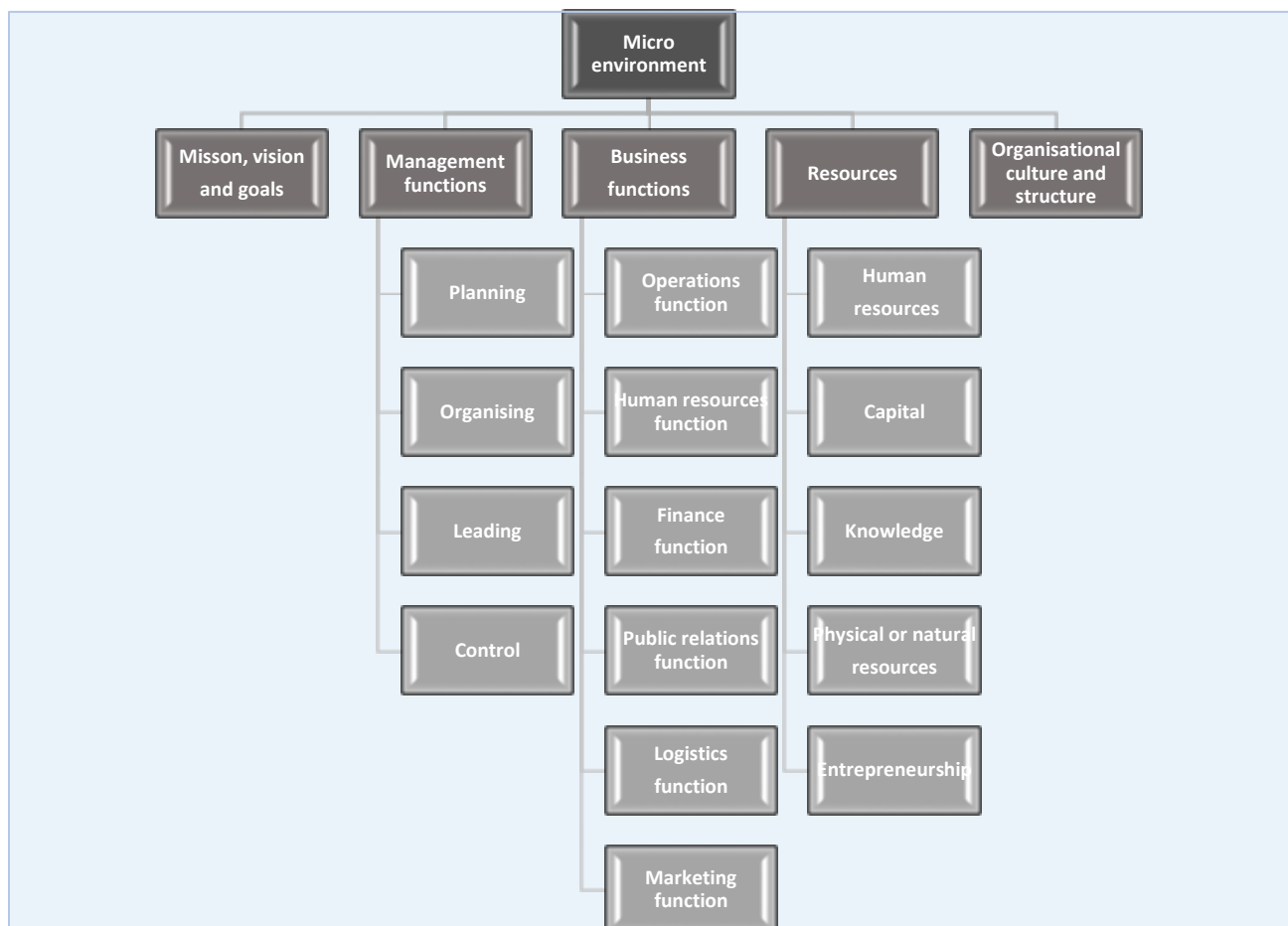
### **3.4.1 The micro environment**

The micro, or internal, environment refers to the environment inside a business and comprises the business functions and management tasks of the organisation (De Beer & Rossouw, 2018). It further includes the mission and objectives of the organisation, as well as the resources (basically the traditional factors of production) necessary for the business to operate, such as its employees, capital and knowledge (Strydom, 2014). It is the area of a business over which management has direct control through the decisions that managers will make. This environment can also be referred to as the decision-making environment as the decisions that are made in this environment will have an impact on the organisation itself (Alsemgeest et al., 2017). In terms of a sporting organisation, management has direct control over which athletes they want to have on their team in order to beat the competition and attract the fans. The athletes, in essence, become the sporting organisation's employees (Bester, 2012). Big, corporate gyms, such as Virgin Active or Planet Fitness, employ thousands of people throughout the world, including personal trainers, fitness instructors, sales representatives, and Biokineticists.

By analysing the micro environment, managers can determine the organisation's strengths and weaknesses, which will allow them to take advantage of opportunities and counter threats from the external environment (Strydom, 2014). Strengths refer to those competencies in which the organisation excels and which should be exploited, while weaknesses refer to those factors which the organisation should improve upon if they wish to remain competitive (Alsemgeest et al., 2017).

A strength of a health and fitness centre, for example, would be the highly skilled and dedicated personal trainers and the state-of-the-art equipment, while a weakness would be not hosting spinning classes or similar specialised activities that are presented by the competitors. On the other hand, opportunities refer to aspects outside the organisation, which should be identified and made the most of, while threats are those things outside the organisation, which need to be avoided (Alsemgeest et al., 2017). An opportunity for that centre would be to stay open 24 hours a day, while a threat would be its competitors that could be undercutting their prices by offering lower joining or monthly fees.

Figure 3.3 shows a diagrammatic representation of the factors that comprise the micro environment of a sporting organisation. These factors will be briefly discussed in the sections that follow.



**Figure 3.3: Composition of the micro environment of a health and fitness centre. (Source: Researcher's own composition).**

### 3.4.1.1 Mission, vision, values/goals and objectives

The vision, mission, and goals are at the core of the organisation's existence. The vision explains what the organisation wants to become one day, while the mission describes the purpose of the organisation and identifies what distinguishes the organisation from its competitors (Strydom, 2014). The goals and objectives of an organisation refer to the targets that an organisation wants to achieve (De Beer & Rossouw, 2018).

The difference between goals and objectives is that goals are set for the entire organisation for the long-term, while objectives are set specifically for the departments over the medium- and short- term. Figure 3.4 illustrates the relationship between these concepts, while Table 3.2 highlights the mission, vision, and values of Virgin Active.

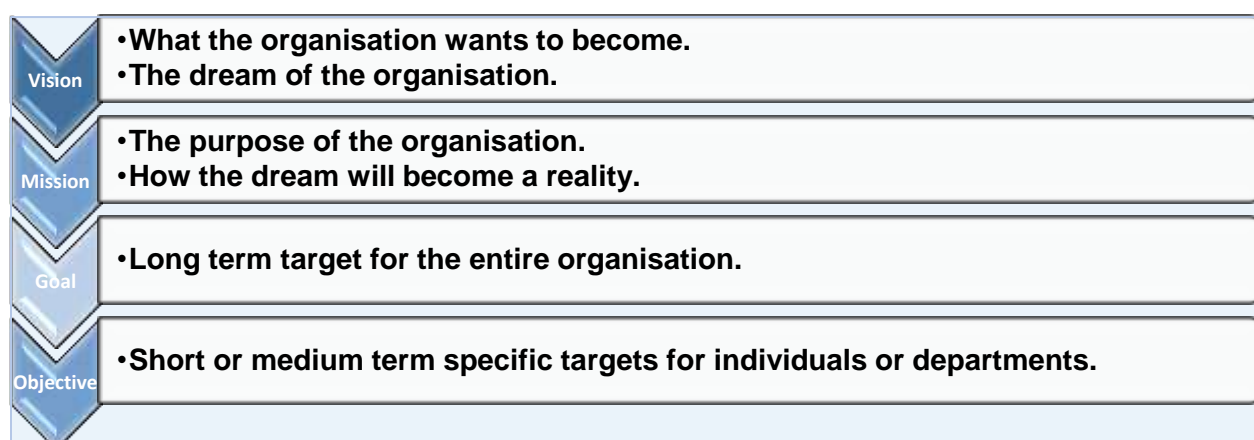


Figure 3.4: The relationship between vision, mission, goals, and objectives. (Adapted from Alsemgeest et al. (2017:35)).

Table 3.2: Mission, vision and values of Virgin Active.

Mission	Vision	Values/Goals
To make exercise irresistible and to bring positive change to people's lives, because life is more fun when you move.	To be the world's most loved exercise brand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insatiable curiosity – We are all about learning new things.</li> <li>• Smart disruption – If there is a better way to do things, believe us, we'll find it.</li> <li>• Heartfelt service –Got questions or comments, we are all ears.</li> <li>• Delightfully surprising – We go above and beyond expectations.</li> <li>• Straight up – We keep it real.</li> <li>• Red hot – we hire the best people, develop the most innovative products, and work with leading partners.</li> </ul>

Source: Brait, 2017; Virgin Active, 2018

### **3.4.1.2 Management functions**

As shown in Figure 3.3, the management functions of a health and fitness centre are those activities conducted by the management team and include the planning, organising, leading, and control of the day-to-day activities of the organisation.

#### ***Planning***

Planning can be defined as the “systematic and intelligent description of the direction an organisation must follow to achieve its goals” (Rudansky-Kloppers, 2018:78). It involves the setting of goals, and the development of various strategies, schedules and tasks necessary to achieve the goals (Boddy & Paton, 2011; Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). Effective planning offers the following benefits for an organisation (Boddy & Paton, 2011; Vrba, 2014; Alsemgeest, et al., 2017):

- It is the basis of the other management functions of organising, leading, and control.
- It clarifies the direction and purpose of the organisation and facilitates decision-making.
- It is future orientated and can help to minimise the negative outcomes of change and uncertainty.
- It motivates the employees to reach the goals and objectives of the organisation and helps to promote innovative ideas.
- It ensures that the resources of the organisation are utilised effectively and helps to reduce wastage and overlap.
- It promotes effective coordination among the different departments.
- It increases a manager’s control as it enables employees to measure their progress against the set targets.

It is, therefore, of vital importance that a manager of a health and fitness centre, or any organisation, conduct thorough planning as it will provide a direction for the organisation, reduce the impact of changes in the external environment, and promote a sense of cohesion and coordination within the organisation (Vrba, 2014). Furthermore, through planning, an organisation will become proactive rather than reactive (Smit, Cronje, Brevis & Vrba, 2012 (hereinafter Smit et al., 2012)).

Planning involves the setting of long-, medium-, or short-term objectives for an organisation, and is carried out at all levels of management. For example, the manager of a new health and fitness centre can have a short-term plan of having ten new members join in the opening month, or a

long-term plan of opening new branches around the country over the next ten years. Once the plans have been formulated, management can decide how to optimally organise its resources in order to achieve their objectives (Smit et al., 2012).

### ***Organising***

Organising refers to the co-ordination of activities to achieve the set objectives of the organisation, and takes place after the planning process (De Beer, 2018). Organising involves the delegation and co-ordination of resources, activities and tasks, and the creation of a framework for achieving the goals and objectives of the organisation (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015; De Beer & Rossouw, 2018). Organising further allows for the allocation of resources to the various departments or individuals within the organisation, and defines the duties and procedures which will enable the organisation to achieve its objectives (Rudansky-Kloppers, 2014). Organising implies the combining of the physical, human and financial resources of an organisation so that they work well together (Alsemgeest et al., 2017). Effective organising is important for a number of reasons (Smit et al., 2012; Alsemgeest et al., 2017):

- It allows for the allocation of responsibilities and accountability to employees.
- It creates clear communication channels throughout the organisation.
- It facilitates division of work and departmentalisation, and improves teamwork and synergy.
- It promotes coordination throughout the organisation.

In a health and fitness centre, for example, management would organise their employees to different sections of the organisation. In other words, they would allocate personal trainers to the weights section to assist those clients who want to build muscle, as well as to the toning circuit to help clients use the equipment effectively.

Closely linked with organising is the concept of coordination. This is particularly important for a health and fitness centre as, without the coordination of the various individuals, teams and groups, as well as the collaboration between competing organisations, the industry would not survive (Bester, 2012). Organising is an indispensable component of the management process and without it, the plans and strategies of the organisation cannot be implemented successfully (Brevis-Landsberg, 2014b).

## ***Leading***

As shown in Figure 3.3, the third management function is that of leading. Leading refers to the influencing, directing and guiding of employees by management towards the achievement of the organisation's goals (Vrba, 2014). In other words, leading refers to the motivation, empowerment and encouragement of employees to achieve the organisation's goals and objectives (Holtzhausen, 2018). Leading plays an important role in the success of an organisation as, without effective leadership, employees can develop a lack of drive and motivation towards attaining the goals of the organisation (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). Leading works hand-in-hand with three other supporting tasks of management, namely, motivation, communication, and the handling of conflict (De Beer, 2018). In a health and fitness centre, for example, the manager in charge of the personal trainers would have to communicate the organisation's goals to the personal trainers and motivate them to help the clients to the best of their ability.

It is important to note that leading and managing is not the same thing; however, both are required in an organisation. According to Alsemgeest et al (2017:176), leaders "are people who do the right things", while managers "are people who do things right". Management is broader in scope than leadership, and entails the four management functions of planning, organising, leading, and control. A leader, on the other hand, should be someone who (Alsemgeest et al., 2017):

- Brings about change and challenges the status quo.
- Develops the vision for the organisation and sets its direction.
- Communicates the vision and direction to the employees, and gets the employees involved in achieving the vision.
- Motivates and inspires employees.

## ***Control***

The final management function is that of control. Control is the part of the management process that monitors planning and supports leadership (Oosthuizen, 2018). Managers need to implement control measures to ensure that the organisation is making progress towards attaining its goals, and that the limited resources are being used effectively (Brevis-Landsberg, 2014a). Oosthuizen (2018) and Alsemgeest et al. (2017) define control as the process of establishing and implementing mechanisms to ensure that the performance of an individual or department matches the set standards and that the goals of the organisation are achieved. In other words, control implies that the actual performance is compared with the set standards, and action is taken should any deviations occur (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). In terms of a health and fitness centre,



the set standard could be that they want ten new members to join the club each month. If they look at the actual applications for the month, management may discover that less than ten members joined for the month of February. Management could then try to increase this number by offering promotions or through increasing their advertising and marketing. A further example would be if the sales representatives in a gym overspend on their monthly budget, management could then implement measures to bring the spending back in line with the budgeted costs.

#### **3.4.1.3 Business functions**

The business functions include the essential functional areas, or departments, that make up an organisation and allow it to function. These can include departments such as finances, operations management, human resources management, marketing, logistics, and public relations among others (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). In a health and fitness centre, for example, operations management would be concerned with the facilities and the equipment, while human resources management would be concerned with all aspects pertaining to the personal trainers and other staff members. The marketing department would be concerned with the advertising and attracting of consumers, while the finances department would be in charge of obtaining capital and ensuring the payment of the centre's debts (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015).

#### **3.4.1.4 Resources**

As shown in Figure 3.3, various resources, or factors of production, are needed by an organisation in order to conduct its day-to-day activities. These resources are natural or physical resources, capital, human resources, entrepreneurship, and knowledge.

##### ***Natural or physical resources***

Natural resources are the scarce and limited resources found in nature, which are at the disposal of humankind (De Beer, 2014; Venter, 2014). These can include metals and minerals, land, forests, water, and residential stands. Often, these resources need to be processed by humans into a usable state, for example, the iron ore is mined from the ground and then processed into the free weights to be used in a health and fitness centre. A health and fitness centre, furthermore, is built on a specific stand out of bricks and cement, and uses water for the swimming pool, showers, and drinking fountains.

## **Capital**

Capital is used by an organisation to produce the goods and services that are purchased by the consumers (De Beer, 2014). This can include the fixed assets of an organisation that have a long lifespan such as the buildings, computers, and machinery. In terms of a health and fitness centre, the capital would include not only the money used to start the centre, but also the gym equipment, computers, and the building itself.

A large amount of capital is needed to start a gym, with the basic costs of opening a gym in America ranging between US\$10 000 and US\$100 000 or more (Zoldak, 2017; Fitness Texter, 2018). This is for a very basic, small gym and excludes operational costs, for example such aspects as staff salaries and the payment of bills, and an Olympic-sized swimming pool. A medium-sized gym with a swimming pool can cost up to US\$1.5 million, while a large gym with complementary services and the possibility of franchise options can easily cost US\$5 million to start up (Profitable Venture, 2018). Opening a gym in South Africa can cost anything from R5 million to R20 million (van Rensburg, 2016), and this includes the cost of equipment, which can range from entry level equipment to the premium range equipment. Table 3.3 highlights the costs of the variety of gym equipment typically needed.

**Table 3.3: Estimated costs of gym equipment.**

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Treadmills	R30 000 to R150 000 per treadmill
Bikes	R20 000 to R90 000 per bike
Spinning bikes	R10 000 to R80 000 per bike
Elliptical machines	R30 000 to R130 000 per elliptical machine
Rowing machines	R10 000 to R20 000 per rowing machine
Strength machines	R25 000 to R75 000 per machine
Cable crossovers and multi-gyms	R50 000 to R130 000 per machine
Barbell and dumbbell racks	R10 000 to R30 000 per rack
Dumbbells (2kg to 60kg)	R400 to R16 000 per dumbbell
Barbells (10kg to 50kg)	R1 200 to R6 000 per barbell
Rubber flooring	R200 to R400 per square metre

**Source: van Rensburg (2016).**

## ***Human resources***

The human resources include the mental and physical skills and talents of the people employed by the organisation to create products or render services (Venter, 2014). For example, in a health and fitness centre, the human resources could comprise the general managers, fitness instructors, personal trainers, Biokineticists, reception and administration staff, kids' club staff, cleaning staff, maintenance staff, cafeteria staff, and sales staff, among others. The estimated staff complement at an average Virgin Active fitness centre in Pretoria is around 30 staff members per shift, with two shifts per day<sup>1</sup>. With 142 clubs across South Africa, and an average of 60 staff members (30 x 2 shifts per day) per club, Virgin Active has a staff complement of approximately 8 520 employees.

## ***Entrepreneurship***

Entrepreneurs are those individuals who are prepared to take the risks to produce products or render services to their community. For example, individuals such as Joe Gold and Hippolyte Triat were prepared to take the risks to start their own fitness centres, a concept that was not really heard of in their time. A further example of an entrepreneur is Sir Richard Branson who started Virgin Active in Lancashire, in the United Kingdom (UK) in 1999. Virgin Active entered South Africa in 2001 when, at the request of Nelson Mandela, Richard Branson bought the embattled Health and Racquet Club for R319.6 million (Independent Online News, 2000 (hereinafter IOL News, 2000)).

An 80% stake in Virgin Active was bought by Brait Investment Company (owned by South African entrepreneur and billionaire, Christoffel Wiese) for approximately R12 billion in 2015 (Spillane & Kew, 2015). Until 2015, Christo Wiese was the founder, chairman, and largest shareholder in the Pepkor Group, which comprises the Pep, Shoprite, Ackermans, Checkers and Stuttafords retail chains, after which the Pepkor Group was bought by Steinhoff International. Wiese became the largest stakeholder in Steinhoff in 2014 and stepped down as chairman in 2017 in the midst of the accounting irregularity scandal. Worth an estimated R13 billion, Christoffel Wiese currently owns 18% of Shoprite Holdings and has stakes in Brait, Invicta Holdings, and the mining sector investor, Pallinghurst (Nsehe, 2012; Forbes, 2018). Like Sir Richard Branson, and many others, Christo Weise was an entrepreneur, albeit a flawed leader, who was prepared to take the necessary risks to render services and deliver products to his community.

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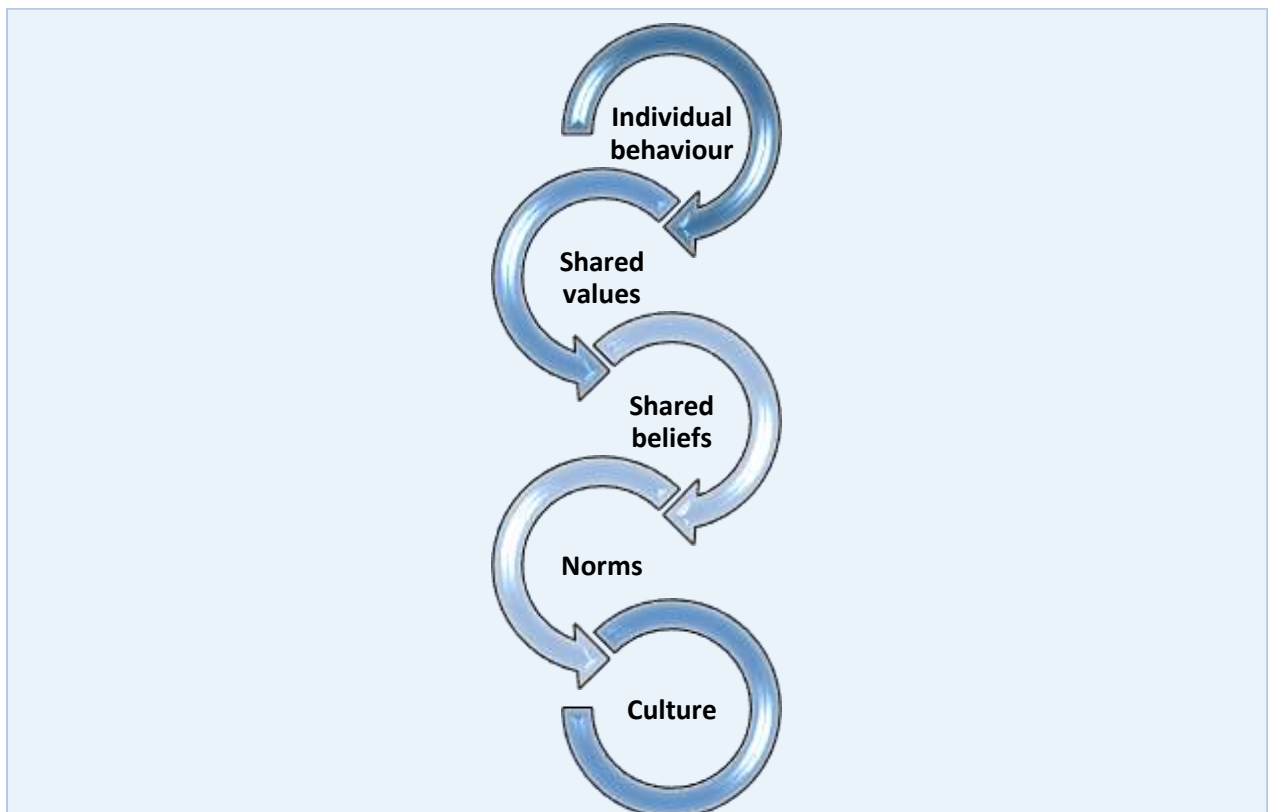
<sup>1</sup> Information was received from an employee at a Virgin Active fitness centre in Pretoria.

## ***Knowledge***

The final resource in an organisation is that of knowledge. Knowledge management is the “process of discovering and harnessing an organisation’s intellectual resources” (De Beer, 2014:3). This could include, for example, knowing how to use information technology to improve an organisation.

### ***3.4.1.5 Organisational structure and culture***

Every organisation has its own unique structure and culture. The culture of an organisation refers to its identity or the way the organisation likes to do things (Alsemgeest et al., 2017). An organisational culture develops when individual employees share common values, which are used to establish beliefs and norms, that are then used to guide their behaviour towards other employees and people outside of the organisation (Boddy & Paton, 2011). This is depicted in Figure 3.5.



**Figure 3.5: The development of an organisational culture. (Adapted from Boddy & Paton (2011)).**

The aspects mentioned in this section all form part of a health and fitness centre's micro environment. In the next section, the market environment will be discussed.

### 3.4.2 The market environment

The market or task environment refers to that environment which is immediately outside of the organisation itself, and where the organisation conducts its business (Kiley, 2018). While the organisation can influence the market environment to some extent, management has very little or no direct influence or control over this environment (De Beer & Rossouw, 2018). The typical market environment comprises four important factors, namely the consumers, the suppliers, the intermediaries, the competitors, and alliances. These factors are shown in Figure 3.6 and will be briefly discussed in the sections below.

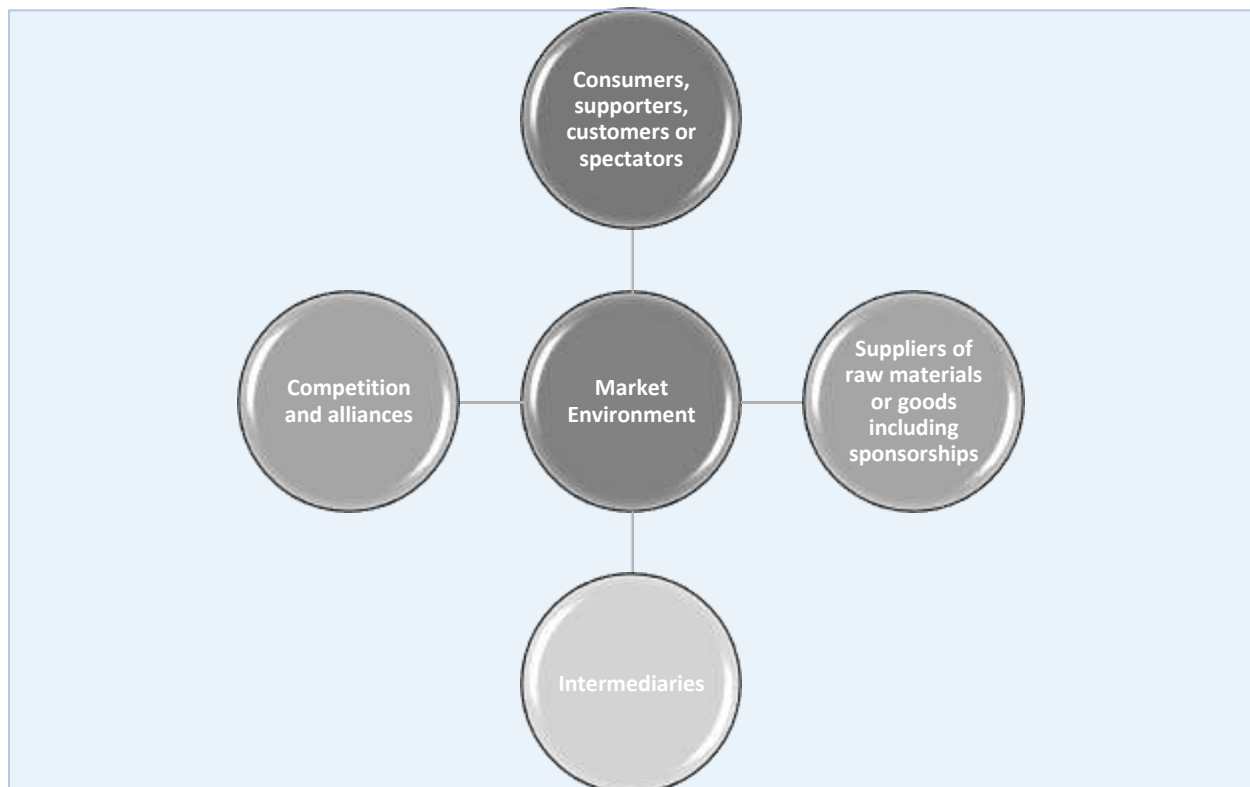


Figure 3.6: Factors in the market environment of a health and fitness centre. (Source: Researcher's own composition).

### **3.4.2.1 Consumers**

As discussed in Chapter Two, a consumer is an integral part of an organisation's success. A consumer refers to any patron, whether an individual or organisation, who purchases the business' products or services (Kiley, 2018). Consumers are the main reason for a business to operate, and without consumers, a business will cease to exist (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). In a sporting organisation, a consumer can also be referred to as a spectator or supporter, for example, the thousands of loyal spectators of a soccer team who pay large amounts of money to attend the team's games and purchase team-specific merchandise (García & Welford, 2015). In terms of a health and fitness centre, the consumers would be the current active and paying members of the centre, as well as the potential members of the centre. Without enough members, the health and fitness centre would not be able to make enough profit to continue its operations.

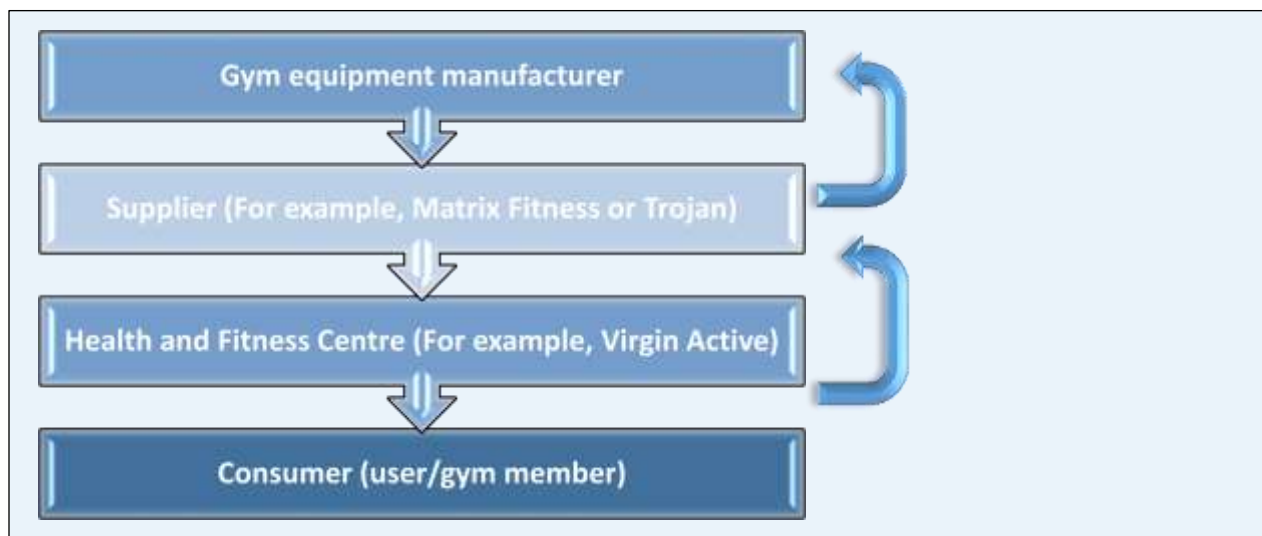
The fitness industry in South Africa generates the world's highest revenue, with Virgin Active making approximately R7.5 billion in gym membership fees a year from the approximately 715 000 members in its 142 gyms across South Africa (Mapumulo, 2017; Business Tech, 2018). This means that for every gym in South Africa, there are on average 5 035 members. On average, each member pays R500 in gym membership fees (Mapumulo, 2017), which means that each gym makes approximately R30 210 000 annually in gym membership fees alone (5 035 members x 500 x 12 months). As mentioned in Section 3.4.1.4 of this chapter, it can take anywhere between R5 million to R20 million to establish a gym in South Africa. Assuming a new Virgin Active gym costs R20 million to start, and has 5 035 members from its inception, the gym would hypothetically break-even in a couple of months ( $20\,000\,000/30\,210\,000 = 0.66$ ), after which it would begin to make profit. However, this will not always be the case. Depending on the number of members, its location, the amount of membership fees charged, and any number of other expenses or factors, the gym can break-even anywhere from five to ten years, if not more. This highlights the importance of consumers in the health and fitness industry.

The decision of a consumer to purchase a specific product or service is determined through a number of internal and external factors. These consumer behaviour factors were discussed in detail in Sections 2.3.3 and 2.3.4 of this dissertation, and include such aspects as motivation, attitudes, family, and reference groups, among others. An important consideration relating to consumers is that of the organisation's market. A market refers to those individuals who wish to satisfy a particular need and who have the financial means to achieve this (Strydom, 2014). Different types of markets can be identified, such as a consumer market for services (for example a health and fitness centre), or products (for example, a retail store such as Pick 'n Pay), an

industrial market (for those products which are produced with the intention of creating other products), government markets, and international markets (Strydom, 2014). Markets were discussed in greater detail in Section 2.2.1.

### 3.4.2.2 Suppliers

Suppliers refer to any organisation that provides a particular business with raw materials or other products necessary for the business to conduct its activities (Kiley, 2018). This can include, among others, the suppliers of equipment, labour, capital or electricity for a business (Strydom, 2014). The suppliers of a health and fitness centre, for example, would include Eskom, the South African public utility that provides the organisation or facility with electricity, Kauai vendors that provide healthy refreshments and food, and equipment providers such as Matrix Fitness, Trojan, or Vizocom in America, among others. The equipment providers supply the fitness centres with the various pieces of equipment, such as the treadmills and weights. Due to the high costs involved with purchasing equipment, fitness centre managers may opt to hire their equipment instead. This means that the supplier will usually replace the old equipment with new equipment on a regular basis, and the fitness centre will, in turn, save costs on capital outlay (Gym Insight, 2017). A basic example of a supply chain in a health and fitness centre is depicted in Figure 3.7 below.



**Figure 3.7: Basic example of the supply chain in a health and fitness centre. (Source: Researcher's own composition).**

As is evident in Figure 3.7, the manufacturer of the gym equipment will sell their products to various wholesalers and retailers (in this case, the gym equipment suppliers such as Matrix

Fitness or Trojan), who will then sell the equipment to the different health and fitness centres. This equipment will then be used by the centre's consumers. Should the equipment need repairs or should the equipment require maintenance, the centre will then contact the supplier to resolve the issue. Should the supplier not be in a position to carry out the repairs or maintenance, the supplier may then contact the manufacturer. This is an example of the reverse supply chain.

A further example of a supplier in the gym and fitness industry is that of sponsors. For most sporting organisations, the sourcing and retention of sponsors is essential for the survival of the organisation and, in most cases, is a major source of income for those organisations (Bester, 2012). A sponsorship is defined by Rudansky-Kloppers et al. (2015:61) as a "commercial agreement" between a company and a sporting organisation or individual, whereby both parties aim to promote their own interests. Sport sponsorships are growing in South Africa and generated an estimated revenue of R7.3 billion by 2017 (Pricewaterhouse-Coopers, 2013). In most cases, an athlete or team will not be able to compete on a professional level without the help of a sponsor, as the sponsor can help pay for the expenses incurred before and during a competition. This will include the sponsor covering aspects such as accommodation, match fees, equipment, and apparel. Virgin Active UK, for example, is the fitness partner and sponsor of England Rugby, working closely with the different rugby teams to help them improve their fitness, training, and game plans. Virgin Active UK further offers the chance for the players and supporters to win tickets to the games and to meet some of the stars of the sport (Virgin Active, 2017).

### **3.4.2.3 Competition and alliances**

Competitors are the third aspect of the market environment and comprise those businesses that offer consumers a similar product or service to that of another business (Kiley, 2018). In the South African health and fitness industry, the two leading competitors are Planet Fitness and Virgin Active each with a number of clubs in major areas around South Africa (CATHSSETA, 2013). These two organisations are under pressure from both direct and indirect competition in the industry.

Direct competition in this industry refers to other fitness centres which are growing in popularity and include the introduction of a number of smaller fitness centres chains, also referred to as boutique health and fitness centres, that cater for a specific consumer segment (for example Curves and Go Health), community-operated fitness centres, and independently-operated fitness centres (Anon, 2010). Indirect competition, on the other hand, can refer to generic sporting



disciplines as well as private fitness and alternative fitness disciplines such as the Adventure Boot Camp for Women.

Virgin Active controls approximately 70% of the gym market in South Africa, with over 130 clubs, followed by Planet Fitness with 32 clubs and Zone Fitness with 22 clubs (Mapumulo, 2017). One reason for this is attributed to the alliances forged between medical aid schemes and certain health and fitness centres. An example of this alliance is the one between Discovery Health and the different chain fitness centres, namely, Virgin Active, Planet Fitness, and Curves. Through this alliance, Discovery subsidises the membership fees of its members, making it cheaper for its members to attend a health and fitness centre. Discovery then rewards its members for taking care of their health and well-being. This results in a lower need for medical treatment, thus saving Discovery money (CATHSSETA, 2013). The final factor in the market environment of a sporting organisation is that of intermediaries.

#### **3.4.2.4 Intermediaries**

Intermediaries act as the middleman between the manufacturer and the consumer and can include wholesalers, retailers, brokers, agents, representatives, bankers and insurance brokers (Strydom, 2014). An example of a growing intermediary in the health and fitness industry is that of the dietary and performance-enhancement supplement industry. The vitamin and supplement industry in South Africa is worth over R2.9 billion and is growing annually (Stanford, 2016). Many people use supplements to boost energy, lose weight, enhance their performance, or build muscle (Volek, n.d.). While the supplement provider is not an intermediary as such, by selling the supplement to a health and fitness centre for example, which then sells the supplement to its members, the health and fitness centre would then be acting as an intermediary. A further example of an intermediary would be a sports agent who liaises between an athlete and his or her sponsors.

These intermediaries, together with the consumers, suppliers, alliances, and competition, constitute the market environment of the health and fitness businesses. In the next section, the external or macro environment will be discussed.

### 3.4.3 The macro environment

The external, or macro, environment of an organisation comprises six factors or sub-environments, namely the political and legal, economic, social, technological, environmental, and international factors. These factors exert a direct or indirect influence on an organisation and constitute the uncontrollable forces that act on a business (Strydom, 2014). While management has almost complete control over the micro environment, and a certain degree of control over its market environment, it has no control over the macro environment. The business is often the “victim” of the events that occur in the macro environment and, therefore, management should try as far as possible to predict these events and the possible consequences these events will have on the business (Kiley, 2018). Figure 3.8 is a diagrammatic representation of the macro environment and its sub-environments, each of which will be briefly discussed in the following sections.



Figure 3.8: The macro environment of a health and fitness centre. (Source: Researcher's own composition).

#### **3.4.3.1 Political and legal sub-environment**

The political sub-environment is defined as the environment in which competition for power within a society takes place, and which influences how that society will function (Kiley, 2018). It further refers to the impact of the regulations and laws promulgated by a country's government and the impact that the government has on the country's sporting codes (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). While this environment influences all sporting disciplines within a country, it can also have an impact on other countries, and their view of the country in question. For example, international boycotts can occur due to a country's political ideologies, such as those that occurred due to the apartheid regime in South Africa or during the Cold War (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015).

Like any other business, health and fitness centres must adhere to the legislation of the country. Furthermore, the legal implications of the decisions and conduct of the centre's members and management should be carefully considered (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). As a health and fitness centre is also a business, it should abide by the labour laws. In South Africa, this would include the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997, Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, as well as legislation relating to health and safety, financial regulations and requirements, and the regulations pertaining to the fitness industry in terms of the National Sport and Recreation Act 110 of 1998 (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015).

#### **3.4.3.2 Economic sub-environment**

The economic environment has a direct influence on the survival of a business as it consists of a number of factors that have an influence on the personal disposable income of the consumers and their purchasing behaviour (De Beer & Rossouw, 2018). A country's economy comprises all the products and services that are manufactured and consumed by that country, and provides an indication of that country's wealth (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). The economic environment will include aspects such as inflation, interest rates, exchange rates, levels of employment, and the income of the consumers (Strydom, 2014). All of these factors have an impact on the consumer's disposable income.

The disposable income of a consumer refers to the money which is left over after the essential goods and services have been paid for, and is one of the most important economic indicators for a health and fitness centre (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). The disposable income will

influence whether a consumer can afford to attend a fitness centre or partake in a sporting event. This disposable income can be the determining factor as to whether a health and fitness centre can survive and be profitable. As attending a health and fitness centre, or partaking in a sporting event, is primarily seen as a leisure activity by many people, the industry as a whole is heavily influenced by, and relies greatly on, the economic environment (Bester, 2012).

Virgin Active and Planet Fitness have implemented different price packages to counteract the lower levels of disposable income in an attempt to appeal to prospective consumers of all income levels. These packages differ in price as a result of the club's size, location, equipment, and facilities. The most popular packages on offer from Virgin Active are highlighted in Table 2.2 in the previous chapter and include membership packages ranging from R199 per month to R1 250 per month.

There are also a number of club-dependent package offers available to Virgin Active customers, such as discounted rates for off-peak times and for pensioners. Furthermore, different reward partners also offer discounted rates to those shown in Table 2.2. For example, Discovery members can receive up to 100% off their gym membership fees (Virgin Active or Planet Fitness) if they reach a certain number of Rewards Goals in a particular month. Discovery members also pay a lower monthly fee if they visit the gym 36 times in a rolling 12-month period.

### **3.4.3.3 Social sub-environment**

The third aspect in the macro environment of a health and fitness centre is that of the social environment. This environment describes the characteristics of the society in which the health and fitness centre operates and includes aspects such as a country's demographics, urbanisation levels, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, and the changing roles of women, to name but a few (Strydom, 2014; Kiley, 2018). A country's demographics will include information pertaining to the consumers' ages, education levels, gender or religion (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). According to Wicker, Hallmann and Breuer (2012) people with a higher level of education are most often the ones who will partake in sporting activities. Furthermore, an individual's age and gender can also play a role. Wicker, Hallmann and Breuer (2012) state that sport participation is often undertaken by younger people in good health, with men being more active than women. While this is a leading perception associated with health and fitness centres, this may not always be the case. Health and fitness centres should be aware of the different generations of consumers who are members of their respective centres.

A leading healthcare company in the United Kingdom stated that their most frequent gym-goers are the septuagenarians (people between the ages of 70 and 79 years old) who attend the gym an average of seven and a half days per month, with the most frequent visitors (72-year-olds) attending an average of eight days per month. Members between the ages of 20 and 25 visit a health and fitness centre approximately six and a half times a month, while those between the ages of 25 and 39 visit a health and fitness centre an average of six times in a month (The Telegraph, 2015). The average age of the most frequent gym-goers in Scotland and London is 75 and 65 respectively (The Telegraph, 2015). These two generations are referred to as the Silent or Traditionalist Generation (born before 1945) and the Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964).

Generation X were born between 1965 and 1976 and is the generation that invented “fun fitness” (West, 2018). At this stage in their lives (between the ages of 40 and 50), people start to seriously consider their health, if it has not been a priority in their earlier years. According to West (2018), the opportunity to be social is of vital importance to Generation X, and as a result, this generation is more likely to attend classes and group training programmes such as Pilates, Zumba or spinning.

Generation Y, or the Millennials (born between 1977 and 1995) take part in more fitness activities and make up approximately 48% of all exercisers (West, 2018). This group sees exercise as a part of their overall wellness and seeks out quick and effective exercise routines. Technology and personalisation are important to this generation. The final generation is Generation Z, also known as the iGen or the Centennials, who were born after 1996. For this generation, improving their overall well-being, feeling good, and having a high level of body confidence are important. Furthermore, exercise is viewed as a means of stress management, improving their mental well-being, and as a way to achieve a balanced, holistic lifestyle (West, 2018). Generation Z is all about technology and social media and, unlike Generation X, Generation Z is not afraid to place the fitness centre in a negative light when the service does not meet the expected expectations.

While the country’s demographics, and the generations of the consumers, play a large role in determining the social environment of an organisation, it is not the only factor. Increasing levels of urbanisation and the high levels of diseases such as HIV/AIDS or Cancer, also have an impact on the social environment. A final important aspect is that of the changing roles of women in today’s society. Every day, more and more women are entering the job market and fulfilling various positions - positions that were previously held only by men. This change in the roles of

women can also be seen in the sporting world, with women now partaking in previously “male dominated” sports. This includes, for example, women’s soccer, boxing, and weight lifting.

The increase in the number of women who wish to partake in sport and fitness activities has led to segmentation in the market. Organisations such as Curves, Adventure Boot Camp for Women, and even the insurance company, First for Women Insurance, have grown in popularity as the focus of their business operations is specifically on women. For example, Curves is the largest women’s fitness franchise in both South Africa and the world, with clubs in almost 10 000 locations in over 85 countries (Curves, 2015). The Curves programme is designed specifically for women and offers them a comfortable and supportive environment in which to train – free from men, peer pressure, and other possible issues relating to co-ed training facilities. The health and fitness centres should be mindful of the various factors in the social environment, as these will affect how the organisations operate.

#### **3.4.3.4 Technological sub-environment**

Technology is constantly changing and is helping to improve the lives of people all over the world (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). Technology has made machinery and computers smaller and more powerful, and has changed the way in which people do business and live their day-to-day lives (Kiley, 2018). This can lead to a higher standard of living, lower prices, and continuously new and innovative products and services for consumers (Strydom, 2014).

In the sporting world, technology has played an important role in allowing athletes to do their best. New personal training equipment, apparel, nutrition, time-keeping equipment, and medical equipment, have all resulted in athletes performing faster and performing at their optimal level (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). For example, technological advances in training equipment, running shoes and swimsuits, have allowed athletes, such as Wade van Niekerk, Caster Semenya, Michael Phelps, Chad le Clos, and Usain Bolt, to break world records in their respective disciplines.

The health and fitness industry is no exception to the advancements of technology. As mentioned previously in this chapter, modern day health and fitness centres have changed drastically since their inception. Technology has allowed for equipment, such as treadmills and rowing machines, to be developed. Furthermore, technological advancements in personal equipment, such as the Samsung Galaxy Gear Smart Watch, Apple Watch, and Fitbit, allow people to track their

heartbeat, number of steps taken during the day, and many more exercise related measurements, all of which aid in improving one's general health, fitness and well-being.

A further example is the rise of personal trainers. Personal trainers design training programmes to help their clients achieve their personal fitness and health goals. Personal trainers need to have a knowledge of human anatomy as well as possible issues related to illness and medication. They need to conduct assessments on their clients to determine the client's current fitness level. These assessments include body composition tests through the use of skin fold callipers and bio-electrical impedance which tests the fat percentage of the client, muscular strength and endurance tests, step tests to determine the client's cardio-respiratory ability, flexibility tests, and tests to determine postural problems and muscular imbalances (Cavazos, 2018). From this information, the personal trainer must design a custom programme for the client and provide general dietary and nutritional advice. This programme could include the use of various equipment such as Wattbikes, treadmills, banana treadmills, row machines, elliptical machines, or cable pulley machines, depending on the needs of the client.

### **3.4.3.5 *Environmental or natural sub-environment***

The environmental or natural environment, also known as the physical environment, refers to the natural disasters, weather patterns, and natural resources of a country (Rudansky-Kloppers et al., 2015). It is the environment from which the organisation obtains its physical resources as well as where it disposes of its waste (Strydom, 2014). In a sporting and fitness context, this can also include the physical structures necessary for a sport to take place, such as the stadiums (Bester, 2012) or even the facilities of the health and fitness centre itself.

A further important aspect in this environment is that of sustainability and "going green". Carbon dioxide emissions, water usage, pollution, and the impact on the environment are common topics organisations should be aware of when operating in today's world. South Africa, as a country, relies heavily on coal as its main source of power and energy and contributes to approximately 1.1% of the global greenhouse gas emissions (Marquard, 2017). Furthermore, increasing amounts of polluted water as a result of untreated sewerage and the scarcity of fresh, drinkable water are growing problems for the country (Swilling, Musango & Wakeford, 2016). The drought and subsequent water crisis in the Western Cape during 2017/2018 is a prime example of this dilemma.

Organisations need to change their business practices to utilise resources more efficiently, support sustainability, and to lower their carbon footprint. This can be achieved through the use of renewable energy sources, such as solar or wind power, reduction of waste and pollution, and reducing the carbon footprint through the development of “green organisations” which conduct their business in an environmentally-responsible manner, among others. This applies as much to health and fitness centres as it does to any other organisation.

Two Virgin Active clubs in South Africa have received a Green Star rating of four stars – Virgin Active Collection Alice Lane and, most recently, Virgin Active Collection Menlyn Maine. This rating is based on a building’s performance across nine different categories, each of which carries a certain number of credits (Anon, 2017). This certification promotes the club as an environmentally friendly way to train.

#### **3.4.3.6 *International sub-environment***

The final sub-environment in the macro environment of a health and fitness centre is that of the international environment. The international environment is defined by Kiley (2018) as the events that affect a business which occur outside of the country’s borders, including for example, wars, natural disasters, and policy decisions. Organisations should keep abreast of changes in the international environment in order to stay competitive (De Beer & Rossouw, 2018). Changes in the international environment that could affect a health and fitness centre include new machinery being developed, new activities, imports and exports, as well as changes in political opinions (such as the sanctions placed against South African sport during the apartheid era). For example, Zumba dance and aerobics had its origins in America before becoming a phenomenon in South Africa. These days, a Zumba class can be found in many health and fitness centres across the country and are attended mainly by women of all ages.

The six sub-environments discussed in this section all have an impact on a health and fitness centre. Management of these health and fitness centres should be aware of these factors, as they will play a role in the success of the centre.



### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

Chapter Three began with a brief introduction to the history of physical fitness and the start of health and fitness centres. From its humble beginnings to modern times, health and fitness centres have grown and adapted to become the Virgin Active and Planet Fitness most people are familiar with today. The importance of maintaining one's physical health and fitness, has led to health and fitness centres growing in popularity, resulting in a commercialised industry worth billions. In order to retain this popularity, health and fitness centres require the constant support of their consumers, both existing and new, as was discussed in Chapter Two.

The chapter concluded by highlighting the aspects of the business environment of health and fitness centres in South Africa. This included a discussion of the micro, market and macro environments of a sporting organisation, and in particular, a health and fitness centre. The micro environment comprises the vision, mission, and goals of an organisation, the management tasks, and functional areas of the business, as well as the resources of the organisation. These are variables over which management has full control. The market environment comprises variables that management has some degree of control over, namely, the consumers (the focus of this study), suppliers, competitors, and intermediaries. The section concluded by discussing the six sub-environments of the macro environment, namely the technological, political and legal, natural, economic, international, and social environments, over which management has no control.

This chapter concludes the literature review of this research. Chapter Four will focus on the research methodology to be followed in this research, while Chapter Five will discuss the results of this research.

# CHAPTER 4

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The theoretical foundation and the gathering of secondary research were the focus of the first three chapters of this study. Consumer behaviour and the South African health and fitness business environment were discussed in detail in order to provide a background to the study. The literature review provided guidance on the type of information that will be necessary to conduct this study, and it is from this information that the research objectives were developed. The primary and secondary research objectives for this study are shown in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Primary and secondary research objectives of the study.**

<b>Primary research objective</b>
<b>To develop a consumer typology based on the consumer behaviour of the members of health and fitness centres.</b>
<b>Secondary research objectives</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Determine the influences that will affect an individual's decision to become a member of a health and fitness centre.</li><li>• Determine the specific activities that members pursue at a health and fitness centre.</li><li>• Determine those factors that affect an individual's satisfaction with a health and fitness centre as well as the behavioural intentions of the members in terms of their complaining intentions, promotion of the centre, renewal of their membership, or price sensitivity.</li><li>• Determine what motivates an individual to exercise, join, or remain a member of a health and fitness centre.</li><li>• Explore the reasons why an individual would choose to join a health and fitness centre or not.</li><li>• Identify other forms of exercise done by non-consumers and the reasons why these consumers choose not to belong to a health and fitness centre.</li></ul>

**Source: Researcher's own composition.**

In the remaining chapters of this dissertation, the focus now turns to the collection and analysis of primary data. This data, together with the theoretical background, were used to develop a consumer typology for health and fitness centres.

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the research methodology that was employed in this study. The chapter commences with a brief look at the research process that was followed. This is

followed by a detailed discussion of the research design and descriptors, as well as the research approach of this study. The data collection methods and the measures in place to ensure reliability and validity are then highlighted. The chapter concludes with a discussion on how the data was analysed and ethical considerations that were taken into account.

## **4.2 THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

The research process is a sequential process comprising a number of steps (Cooper & Schindler, 2014), and provides direction to a research project. While all of these steps are important, they do not necessarily have to be completed in the stipulated order. More often than not, these steps may be omitted or carried out in a different sequence (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). The process is thus seen as iterative, in other words, each step can be revisited and revised until the differences between the steps are minimised, and a logical argument is developed (Wagner, Botha & Mentz, 2012). An illustrated example of the research process followed in this study is shown in Figure 4.1 below and briefly discussed in the explanation that follows.

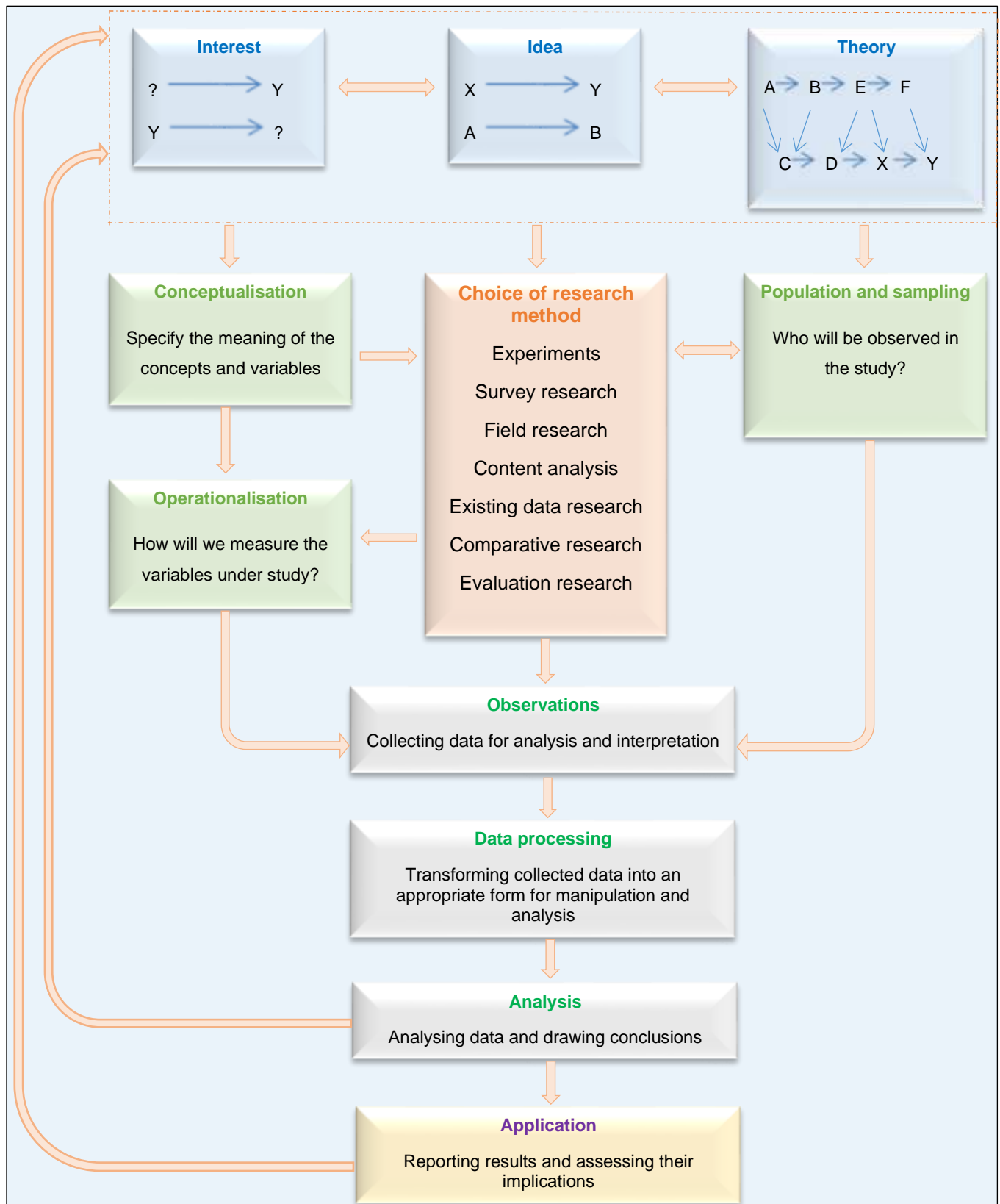


Figure 4.8: The research process. (Adapted from Babbie (2016:114)).

In Figure 4.1, the three topmost three of the research process refers to the generation of interest, ideas, and theory. The letters in the blocks represent different variables or contexts that may be explored before settling on a specific research project. During this stage, the researcher generates ideas on what type of research should be done, the purpose of the research, and the research questions that the researcher wants to answer. The theoretical framework and background to the study are also explored. These concepts were discussed in Chapters One to Three of this dissertation.

Once the purpose and outcomes have been identified, attention is given to the different concepts that will be explored in the research. This is referred to as contextualisation. The different concepts relevant to this study, such as consumer behaviour and the business environment of a health and fitness centre, were discussed in detail in the literature review chapters of this dissertation (Chapters Two and Three respectively). Following from this, the measurement techniques that will be used in the study have to be identified. This is known as operationalisation and will be discussed further in this chapter.

Once conceptualisation and operationalisation have been identified and defined, the focus then turns to the choice of research method, and the selection of the population and sampling methods. These choices are the primary aim of this chapter of the dissertation and will be discussed in the sections that follow. The process then continues with communication or observations (methods of data collection), data processing, and data analysis, all of which are discussed in Chapter Five of this dissertation. The final stage of the research process is the application stage, where the results and conclusions are written up. The conclusions for this study can be found in Chapter Six. The section that follows will go into greater depth regarding the research design applicable to this study.

## **4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Wagner, Botha and Mentz (2012) and Cooper and Schindler (2014) describe the research design as an architectural blueprint for answering the research questions and satisfying the research objectives. The research design is further defined by Bryman, Hirschsohn, Dos Santos, Du Toit, Masenge, van Aardt and Wagner (2014:100, hereinafter (Bryman et al., 2014)) as the “structure that guides the use of a research method and the analysis of the subsequent data”. The research design should encompass a number of essential aspects which, according to Cooper and Schindler (2014:125), include the following:

- An activity and time-based plan, which is based on the research question.
- A guide for selecting types and sources of information.
- A framework for specifying the relationships between the variables of the study.
- A procedural outline for each research activity.

Furthermore, the choice of design should reflect on the decisions regarding various dimensions of the research process, such as:

- How to express causal connections between variables.
- If the results can be generalised outside of the sample population.
- How to understand and explain certain behaviours.
- How to explain the interconnections and changes in social phenomena. (Adapted from Bryman et al., (2014:100))

Research design is an important component of a research study as it can provide insight into the frameworks that can be used to collect and analyse data as well as the criteria to evaluate the research (Bryman et al., 2014). The research design thus refers to the research methodology, data collection methods, data analysis techniques, sampling design, and instrument development to be followed in the study (Wagner, Botha & Mentz, 2012; Cooper & Schindler, 2014) as well as concepts relating to validity, reliability, replication, trustworthiness, and authentication (Bryman et al., 2014). The components of the research design are illustrated in Figure 4.2 below and will be discussed in later sections of this chapter.

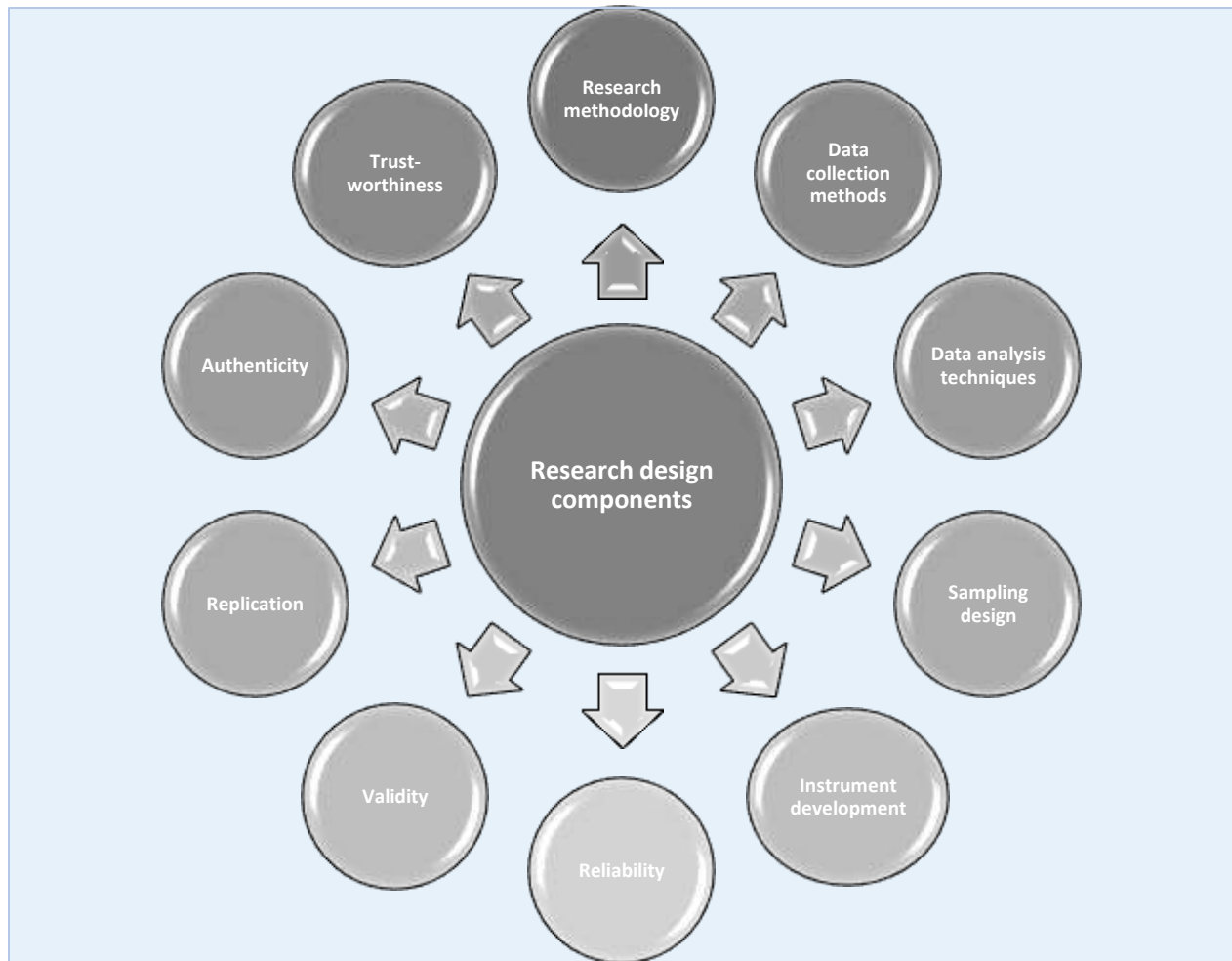


Figure 4.2: Components of the research design. (Source: Researcher's own composition).

## 4.4 RESEARCH TERMINOLOGY

Research is full of unfamiliar terminology. In this section, a brief explanation of a number of research-related terms will be provided, and this terminology will be used throughout the chapter.

### 4.4.1 Ontology, epistemology and axiology

Ontology, epistemology and axiology are philosophical terms used to describe a research paradigm (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012). Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality and how the world operates (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009), and comprises two aspects, namely, objectivism and subjectivism. Objectivism refers to the development of social phenomena

independent of participants, while subjectivism argues that social phenomena is a construct of the perceptions and experiences of the participants (Bryman et al., 2014). Subjectivism is closely related to the constructionism research paradigm that will be discussed later in this chapter.

Epistemology constitutes the accepted knowledge in a discipline (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009; Bryman et al., 2014), and relates to how things can be known, discovered, or disclosed (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). While epistemology is concerned with knowledge, axiology is concerned with what is believed to be true (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012), and what role the researcher's judgements and values play in the research (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). These terms are the essence of a research paradigm, and will be applied to the paradigms in a later section of this chapter.

#### **4.4.2 Deduction and induction**

Deduction and induction are two approaches one can follow when conducting research. With the deductive approach, hypotheses or research questions are developed from general principles (Babbie, 2016), with the objective of verifying or testing a theory rather than developing one (Creswell, 2014). This is achieved by defining the concepts, collecting data, and subjecting that data to a number of tests in order to draw conclusions about the hypotheses or research questions (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009; Cooper & Schindler, 2014). The deduction approach starts with the “why” and moves to the “whether” (Babbie, 2016). The induction approach, on the other hand, moves in the opposite direction.

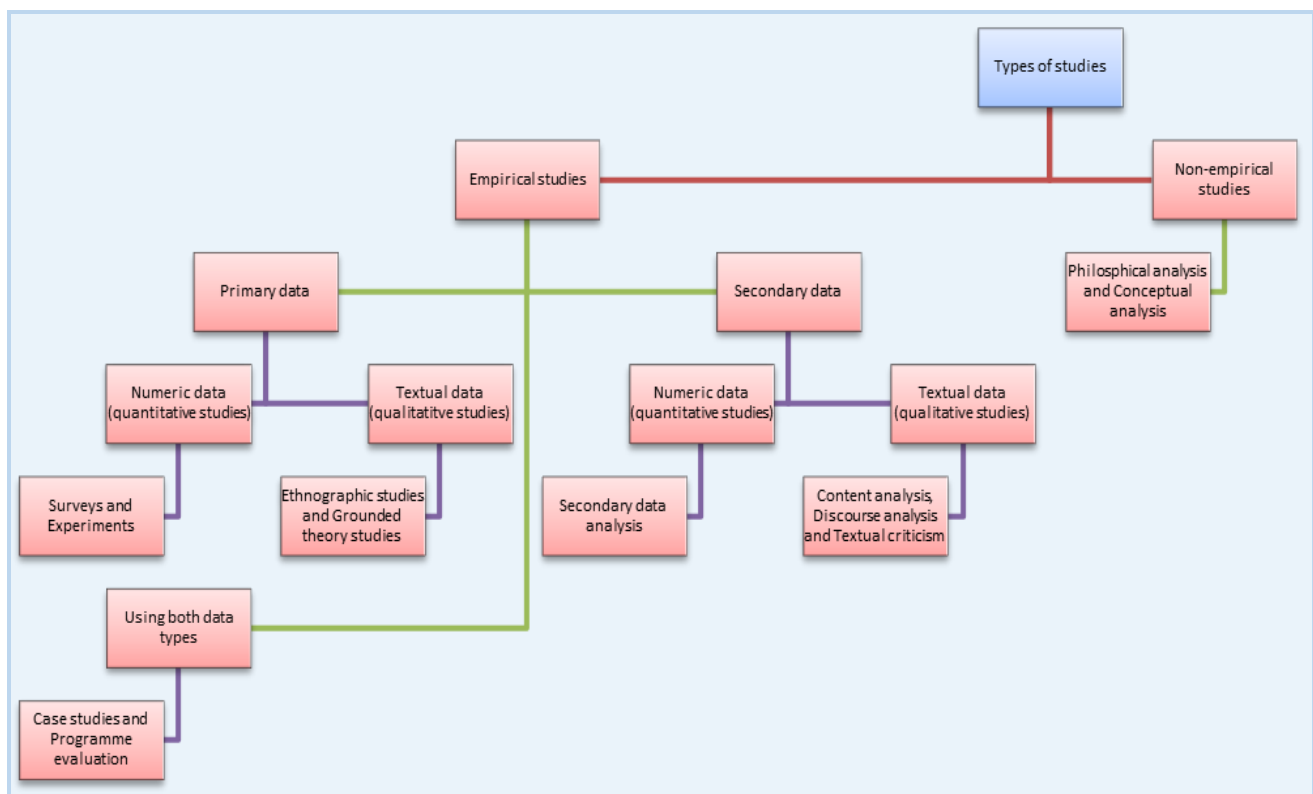
With the induction approach, the researcher draws a conclusion from particular facts or pieces of evidence (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Induction can, therefore, be defined as the “logical model in which general principles are developed from specific principles” (Babbie, 2016:23). In this case, the theory would follow the data, and one answer of many could be identified (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009; Babbie, 2016). Deduction is typically associated with quantitative research whereas induction is used more in qualitative research (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). For this reason, a deductive approach will be followed for this study.



### 4.4.3 Empirical research, primary data and secondary data

Empirical research refers to a logical operation by which a research hypothesis or question is examined against reality through the use of data (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2009 (hereinafter Zikmund et al., 2009); Babbie, 2016). Furthermore, it describes an attempt by researchers to describe, explain, or make predictions about information, and processing that information through the use of mathematics or statistics (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). The classification of empirical and non-empirical research is illustrated in Figure 4.3. As evident in Figure 4.3, empirical data can be classified as primary or secondary data.

Primary data refers to the original data collected by the researcher for the purposes of their study, while secondary data is data which has been collected and recorded by someone other than the researcher, and usually for a different purpose (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005; Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2011).



**Figure 4.3: Classification of empirical and non-empirical studies. (Adapted from Babbie & Mouton (2001) and Snyman (2014:88)).**

As shown in Figure 4.3, empirical studies can be classified into primary data, secondary data, or a combination of both data types. Primary and secondary data can further be classified into numeric and textual data, each with their own specific data collection methods. For this study,

primary, numeric data was collected by means of surveys (which is discussed in Section 4.8.1 of this chapter). The analysis of the primary data, and the results thereof, can be found in Chapters Five and Six of this dissertation. Secondary data was only used in this study to develop the literature review chapters and to provide the background to this study. Secondary data was not used to collect and analyse the data in this study.

The other concepts mentioned in Figure 4.3 may be briefly touched on throughout this chapter in order to provide a better understanding of the research process, but will not be discussed in detail, as they had no bearing on this research.

#### **4.4.4 Variables**

A variable is a symbol, act, event, trait, characteristic or attribute, which can be measured and to which a value can be assigned (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). A variable can further be defined as an attribute that outlines the differences between cases (Bryman et al., 2014). Six basic types of variables can be identified, a number of which were used in the questionnaire for this study:

- Dichotomous variables, which only have two values, for example, male or female.
- Continuous variables, which can be measured in a range on a continuum and may contain decimal numbers, for example, student test scores.
- Nominal variables are those variables that are placed into categories and cannot be ordered by rank, for example, geographical locations.
- Ordinal variables are categories of variables that can be ranked in some order of magnitude, for example, the selection options on a Likert scale.
- Interval variables refer to categories of variables that have identical distances between the categories, for example, the difference between R1 and R2 is the same as the difference between R100 and R101.
- Ratio variables are interval variables that also have an absolute zero value, for example, a scale when measuring income levels. (Adapted from Mentz and Botha (2012); Bryman et al. (2014); Cooper and Schindler (2014)).

Apart from the abovementioned types of variables, a variable can also be classified as either a dependent variable or an independent variable. A dependent variable is one which is explained or predicted by another variable (Zikmund et al., 2009), and is assumed to be caused by another variable (Babbie, 2016). An independent variable, in comparison, is the variable which has an

influence on, or causes, the dependent variable (Babbie, 2016). In other words, the dependent variable changes in response to changes in another variable, while the independent variable is the one that causes the change in the dependent variable (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

## 4.5 DESCRIPTORS OF THE OVERALL RESEARCH DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The various descriptors that were used during the research design process are outlined in Table 4.2 and discussed in the sections that follow.

**Table 4.2: The descriptors of research design.**

Category	Options
Research paradigm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-positivist</li> <li>• Constructivist</li> <li>• Realism</li> <li>• Pragmatism</li> </ul>
The degree to which the research question has been formed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploratory study</li> <li>• Formal study</li> </ul>
The data collection method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring</li> <li>• Communication study</li> </ul>
The ability of the researcher to produce effects on the variables in the study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experimental</li> <li>• Ex post facto</li> </ul>
The purpose of the study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting</li> <li>• Descriptive</li> <li>• Causal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explanatory</li> <li>- Predictive</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
The time dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross-sectional</li> <li>• Longitudinal</li> </ul>
The scope of the study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study</li> <li>• Statistical study</li> </ul>
The research environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field setting</li> <li>• Laboratory setting</li> <li>• Simulation</li> </ul>

Source: Cooper and Schindler (2014:126).

### 4.5.1 Research paradigm

Research involves the intersection between the research design, research method, and the research paradigm as illustrated in Figure 4.4. This section will focus on the research paradigm as an important component of the research process. The research designs and methods will be discussed in later sections of this chapter.

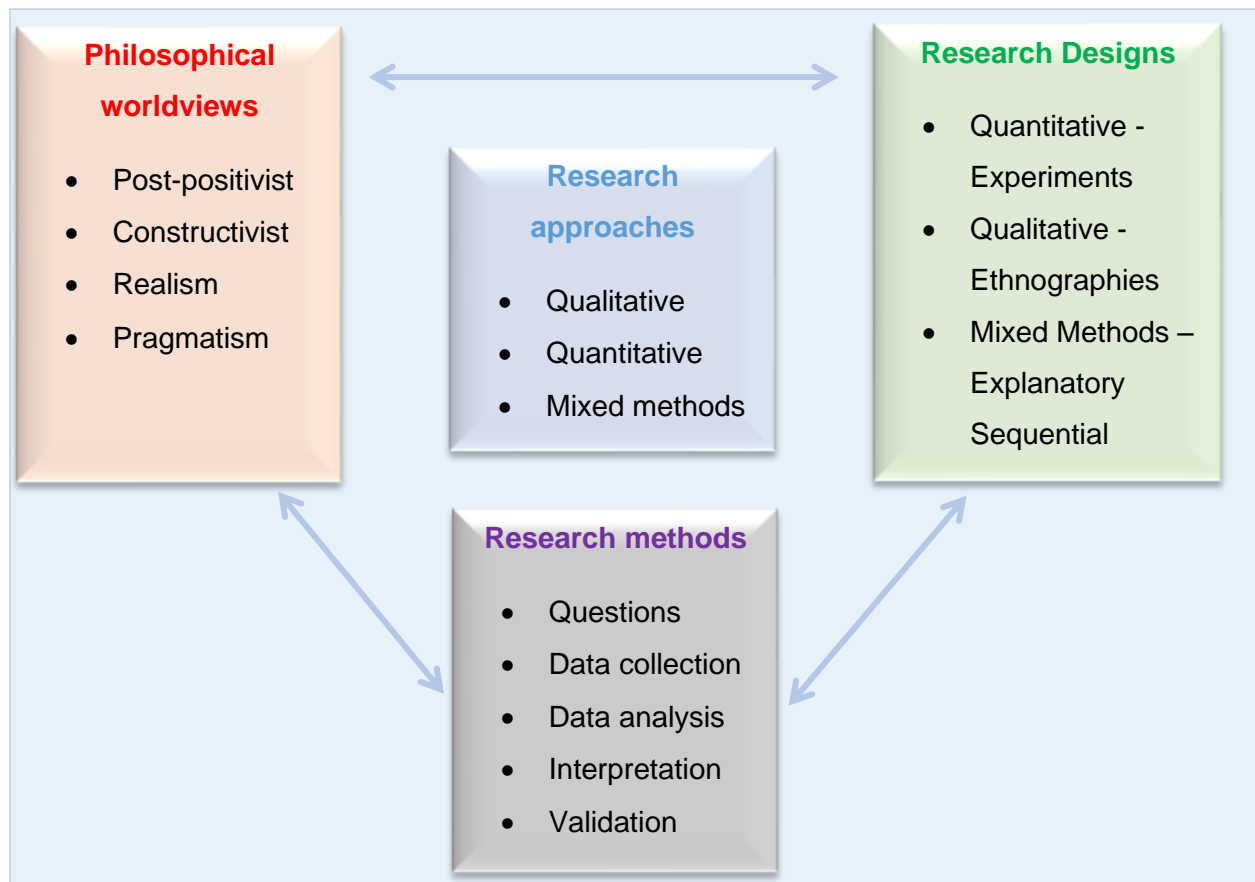


Figure 4.4: Intersection of research paradigms, designs, and methods. (Adapted from Creswell (2014:5)).

A paradigm is described by Babbie (2016:33) as “the fundamental models and frames of reference we use to organise our observations and reasoning”, and represents the assumptions about the way in which a researcher views the world (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The research paradigm (also referred to as the research philosophy or worldview) will help the researcher to clarify their choice of using a qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods approach for conducting their research (Creswell, 2014). A brief discussion on the main paradigms is presented in the sections that follow, and a summary of the ontology, epistemology, and axiology of the different paradigms is presented in Table 4.3.

#### **4.5.1.1 Post-positivism**

The post-positivist approach, also known as positivism or the scientific method approach, believes that the causes of a study will determine the outcomes (Creswell, 2014). Babbie (2016) elaborates by stating that, through this approach, scientific truths can be verified through empirical observations and logical analysis. The post-positivist approach involves the following principles:

- Only phenomena that can be observed by the senses can be verified as sources of knowledge.
- The purpose of theory is to generate hypotheses that can be tested.
- Knowledge is obtained by gathering facts that provide the basis for universal propositions.
- Science should be conducted objectively. (Adapted from Bryman et al. (2014:12))

As mentioned, the purpose of research, according to this paradigm, is to discover and verify universal laws or theories by testing a theory, predicting results, or discovering a cause and effect relationship (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012). The scientific method is generally accepted in this paradigm, whereby a researcher begins with a theory, collects data, and conducts tests in order to obtain conclusions (Creswell, 2014). Thus, the post-positivist approach is most often associated with quantitative research and, therefore, was the approach followed with this study.

#### **4.5.1.2 Constructivism**

The constructivist approach views phenomena as social constructs whose meanings are produced by individuals through social interaction (Bryman et al., 2014). In other words, the constructivist paradigm holds that individuals seek meaning in the world around them and will develop subjective explanations for their experiences (Creswell, 2014). Constructivists believe that reality and knowledge are subjective concepts dependent on the individual's view of the world and their experiences (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012). Constructivism, which can also be referred to as interpretivism, has three basic principles, namely:

- Individuals subjectively construct and give subjective meaning to the world.
- The researcher is part of what must be observed.
- Research is driven by interests. (Adapted from Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler (2011:17)).

Broad and open-ended questions are often used by the researcher in an attempt to understand an individual's experiences and interpret the meaning that individual has about the world (Chilisa

& Kawulich, 2012; Creswell, 2014). Constructivism is, therefore, most often associated with qualitative research.

#### **4.5.1.3 Pragmatism**

Creswell (2014:10) indicates that pragmatism “arises out of situations, actions, or consequences, rather than through antecedent conditions”. Those that follow this approach, believe that the research question is the most important consideration when designing research (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). Pragmatism argues that it is possible to integrate both post-positivist and constructivist positions in order to collect and interpret the data (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009), and thus is more suited to a mixed-methods research study. The pragmatic approach, as a philosophical basis for research, has the following important characteristics:

- Pragmatism does not follow one system of philosophy or reality.
- The researcher has the freedom to choose between the methods and techniques of research that best suit his or her needs.
- Pragmatists do not see the world as an absolute unity and believe that the truth is what works at that time.
- The intended consequences of the research will help the researcher to determine the *how* and *what* of the research.
- Pragmatists agree that research occurs in a number of contexts, and believe that the external world is both objective and subjective. (Adapted from Creswell (2014:11)).

#### **4.5.1.4 Realism**

The final research paradigm is that of realism. The essence of this approach, as mentioned by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009:114) is “that what the senses show to be reality, is the truth”. In other words, reality as a concept is completely independent of the mind and one’s experiences. Two types of realism can be identified. Direct realism states that what an individual experiences through their senses is an accurate portrayal of the world, while critical realism argues that individuals experience sensations, which can be deceived by the senses (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). In Table 4.3, a brief comparison of the four paradigms, in terms of their ontology, epistemology and axiology, can be found.

**Table 4.3: Brief comparison of the research paradigms in terms of their ontology, epistemology, and axiology.**

	<b>Post-positivism</b>	<b>Constructivism</b>	<b>Pragmatism</b>	<b>Realism</b>
<b>Ontology</b>	A single reality that is relatively constant over time and is independent of social actors.	Reality is socially constructed. Therefore, it may change and there may be multiple realities.	The paradigm which best answers the research question is chosen.	Reality is objective and exists independently of human thoughts or beliefs. However, reality is interpreted through social conditioning.
<b>Epistemology</b>	Only observable phenomena, that is independent of the values, interests and feelings of the researcher can provide credible data.	Knowledge is subjective in nature, and the truth lies within the human experience.	Observable phenomena, as well as subjective meanings, can provide acceptable knowledge.	Observable phenomena can provide credible facts. Phenomena can create sensations that are open to misinterpretation. The focus should be on explaining within a context.
<b>Axiology</b>	The researcher is independent of the data and maintains an objective stance. Scientific methods of collecting data should be used.	The researcher is part of the research, and the two cannot be separated.	The researcher adopts both objective and subjective points of view when interpreting the results.	The researcher is biased because of their worldviews and experiences. The research is, therefore, value laden.

Source: Adapted from Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009:119); Chilisa & Kawulich (2012:54).

#### **4.5.2 The degree to which the research question has been formed**

The study can be either formal or exploratory in nature. Exploratory research occurs when no hypotheses have emerged as very little is known about the area of study (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2011). In other words, the researcher has little or no scientific knowledge about the activity or situation they wish to examine (Stebbins, 2012). It is used to discover opportunities or to clarify an ambiguous situation (Zikmund et al., 2009). Therefore, the aim of this type of research approach is to develop new hypotheses and research questions for future research (Cooper & Schindler, 2014), and not necessarily to “provide conclusive evidence to determine a course of action” (Zikmund et al., 2009:54).

The formal study, in comparison, aims to pose and answer a specific research question through precise data source specifications and procedures (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). While the distinction between the two approaches can be seen from their definitions, it is important to note that most research studies contain elements of both approaches. Based on these definitions, however, it can be said that this study leaned towards a more formal approach, rather than an exploratory approach.

### **4.5.3 The method of data collection**

Data collection can be broadly categorised as the collection of data by communication or monitoring, as shown in Table 4.2. Communication involves the researcher asking people questions and gathering the responses, while monitoring involves the collection of data through observations (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). For this study, questionnaires were used to gather the data from the respondents, and thus the communication method of data collection was applicable. Further information on the data collection methods used in this study will be discussed in later sections of this chapter.

### **4.5.4 The ability of the researcher to affect the variables**

As shown in Table 4.2, the ability of the researcher to manipulate and affect the variables can occur in either an experimental design or an ex post facto design. An experiment involves the researcher being able to manipulate the independent variable, and is used when the researcher wants to discover if a variable has an effect on another variable (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Bryman et al., 2014). An ex post facto design, on the other hand, occurs when the researcher has no ability to manipulate the variables, and can merely report on what has happened (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2011). The ex post facto design was used in this study as the researcher reports on the findings of the study and exercised no control over the variables.

### **4.5.5 The purpose of the study**

A study can be categorised as a reporting, descriptive, causal-explanatory, or causal-predictive study. A reporting study aims to create comparisons through the generation of statistics or through the development of a deeper understanding of a phenomenon, while a descriptive study



aims to answer the questions: who, what, where, when, or how much (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). A study can also be causal in nature. Cooper and Schindler (2014) further differentiate between causal-explanatory, or how one variable can cause a change in another variable, and causal-predictive, which is the prediction of how the manipulation of one variable will affect another variable. Based on these definitions, this study on the consumer typologies of members of health and fitness centres is a combination of both a reporting and a descriptive study.

#### 4.5.6 The time dimension

The study can be either a cross-sectional study or a longitudinal study. A cross-sectional study is a “snapshot of a moment in time” (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:128), and refers to the collection of data at a single point in time (Bryman et al., 2014). In contrast, a longitudinal study allows for the collection of data of the same phenomena over a period of time (Babbie, 2016). A longitudinal study is also referred to as a cohort study, as groups of people who share similar experiences, at similar time intervals, are often part of the sample group (Zikmund et al., 2009). Each method has its own advantages and disadvantages, as shown in Table 4.4 below.

Due to the nature of the study, and the time constraints imposed on the study, a cross-sectional method was used to determine the consumer behaviour of members of health and fitness centres.

**Table 4.4: Advantages and disadvantages of longitudinal and cross-sectional methods.**

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Longitudinal method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can reveal an extensive amount of detail.</li> <li>• High levels of comparability can be made.</li> <li>• Allows for modified speculation about the relationships between variables.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be quite expensive.</li> <li>• There is a potential for a high dropout rate among participants.</li> </ul>
<b>Cross-sectional method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inexpensive to carry out.</li> <li>• Short time span.</li> <li>• Low dropout rate of respondents.</li> <li>• No long-term administration or co-operation between the researcher and the respondents is needed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limits the comparability of groups.</li> <li>• Gives no idea about the direction of change a group may take.</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from van Zyl (2014:254).

#### **4.5.7 The scope of the study**

In terms of the scope of the study, Cooper and Schindler (2014) identify two different studies that can be done, namely, the statistical study and the case study. Statistical studies aim to make an inference about a population's characteristics based on the characteristics of the sample (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). This indicates a typical quantitative research approach, as hypotheses and research questions are tested, the findings are generated, and the results are generalised. The case study places emphasis on the complete contextual analysis of fewer events, and relies mainly on qualitative data (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Based on the definitions, the scope of this research is a statistical study.

#### **4.5.8 The research environment**

Research can take place in either a manipulated and controlled environment (laboratory conditions), or under normal everyday conditions, such as a workplace (field conditions) (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Laboratory conditions allow the researcher to exercise greater control over the study which results in a study being easier to replicate (Bryman et al., 2014). As the researcher would not be exercising any control over the variables, and the research would take place in the respondents' natural environments, this study took place under field conditions.

### **4.6 RESEARCH APPROACH**

The research approach refers to the detailed procedures and plans of the research in terms of the data collection, analysis and interpretation (Creswell, 2014), and includes two main approaches, namely, quantitative and qualitative approaches. These approaches are not mutually exclusive, however, and in some cases, a combination of both approaches can be used. This is referred to as a mixed methods approach. Deciding on an appropriate research approach is important, as the approach will determine the sampling techniques, data collection methods and data analysis techniques to be followed. It is important to distinguish between quantitative and qualitative research, both of which will be discussed in the sections that follow. As this study followed a quantitative research approach, more detail and attention is given to quantitative research than qualitative research.

### 4.6.1 Quantitative research

Quantitative research refers to a “data collection technique or data analysis procedure that generates numerical data” (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009:151), and which is used to test an objective theory by examining the relationship between variables (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, quantitative research involves a structured method for data collection that provides numerical results which can be analysed through statistical means (Clow & James, 2014). Quantitative data is, therefore, important for proving or disproving a theory and providing answers to specific questions (Greener, 2013).

Quantitative research attempts to precisely measure a concept, and answers questions relating to how much, how often, how many, when, and who (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Measuring a concept is important for three main reasons:

- It allows for the quantification of fine differences in magnitude.
- It gives a consistent yardstick for making distinctions or gauging differences.
- It provides for a more precise estimate on the extent of the relationship between concepts.

(Adapted from Bryman et al. (2014:33)).

Bryman et al. (2014:40) further indicates that quantitative research adopts a deductive approach to determining the relationship between theory and research, and is concerned with four main considerations, namely:

- *Measurement*, which refers to the data collection instrument being both valid and reliable. These concepts will be discussed in Section 4.10 of this chapter.
- *Causality*, which is concerned with explaining why things are the way they are.
- *Generalisability*, in that the results can be applied to the general population outside of the sample.
- *Replication*, which means that the study was done independently and objectively, and can be reproduced by another researcher.

As shown in the discussion above, quantitative research comprises a number of aspects. These aspects are summarised in Table 4.5 below and will be discussed throughout this chapter.

**Table 4.5: The main aspects of quantitative research.**

<b>Research aspects</b>	<b>Quantitative research</b>
<b>Focus</b>	To describe, explain or predict.
<b>Purpose</b>	Test hypotheses or answer specific research questions.
<b>Approach</b>	Measure and test the data.
<b>Data collection approach</b>	A structured approach with given categories.
<b>Independence of researcher</b>	Researcher acts as an observer and, therefore, the results are objective and free from bias.
<b>Sample size</b>	Large sample sizes are used to produce generalised results.
<b>Research design</b>	Descriptive and causal research designs are most often used.
<b>Data type and preparation</b>	Verbal descriptions reduced to numerical codes for computerised analysis.
<b>Data analysis</b>	Statistical and mathematical analysis that maintains a clear distinction between facts and judgements.

Source: Adapted from Zikmund et al. (2009:136) and Cooper and Schindler (2014:147).

With regard to this research, surveys were used to gather the data and the results were analysed by statistical means. Therefore, this study on the consumer behaviour of members of a health and fitness centre follows a quantitative research approach.

While this study followed a quantitative approach, it is important to provide a brief explanation of the differences between quantitative research and qualitative research in order to justify the use of a quantitative approach. These differences will be discussed in the next section.

## **4.6.2 Qualitative research**

Qualitative research makes use of words and open-ended questions to explore and understand the meaning an individual ascribes to a problem or phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative researchers tend to focus more on the observation and interpretation of a concept rather than its measurement (Bryman et al., 2014). Qualitative research is, therefore, concerned with how (process) and why (meaning) things happen the way they do, and aims to achieve an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

The main aspects of qualitative research are summarised in Table 4.6 and can be compared with the information found in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.6: The main aspects of qualitative research.**

<b>Research aspect</b>	<b>Qualitative research</b>
<b>Focus</b>	To understand and interpret phenomenon.
<b>Purpose</b>	To discover ideas in exploratory research with general research objectives.
<b>Approach</b>	Observe and interpret data.
<b>Data collection approach</b>	Unstructured and free formed.
<b>Independence of researcher</b>	Researcher is intimately involved, resulting in the outcomes being subjective.
<b>Sample size</b>	Small samples used, often in natural settings.
<b>Research design</b>	Exploratory research designs are most often used.
<b>Data type and preparation</b>	Verbal or pictorial descriptions that are reduced to verbal codes.
<b>Data analysis</b>	Human analysis following computer or human coding.

**Source:** Adapted from Zikmund et al. (2009:136) and Cooper and Schindler (2014:147).

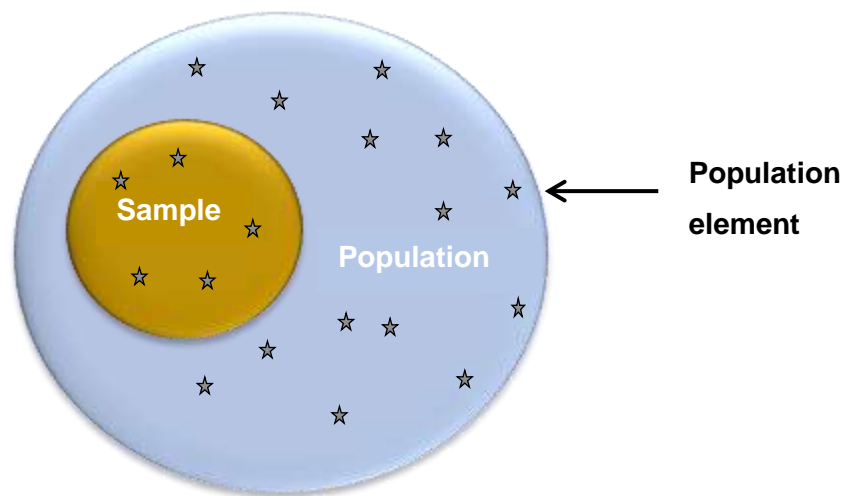
As is evident, qualitative and quantitative research designs differ in fundamental ways. As mentioned, this study followed the quantitative approach and, therefore, the remainder of this chapter will focus on those aspects that are related to quantitative research and thus applicable to this study. The next section will deal with the sampling design of this study.

## **4.7 SAMPLING DESIGN**

Once the concepts have been defined, it is important that a researcher determine the people they wish to study (Babbie, 2016). In this section, the various concepts related to sampling are discussed, followed by the sampling method employed in this study, as well as the sample size for this study.

### 4.7.1 Population, population element, sample and census defined

The population refers to the study object and comprises the “total collection of all units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to make conclusions” (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:52), while a sample is a subset, or portion, of the larger population from which we can draw conclusions about the population (Zikmund et al., 2009; Cooper & Schindler, 2014). The population element refers to a single participant on which a measurement is taken, while the census is a count of all the participants in the population (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). A diagrammatic illustration of these concepts is shown in Figure 4.5.



**Figure 4.5: Population, sample and population element. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009:211).**

In terms of this study, the target population can be described as all active members of health and fitness centres, as well as those individuals who do not belong to a health and fitness centre. The sample comprised those individuals willing to partake in the research. How the sample was selected, and the desired size of the sample, will be discussed in later sections of this chapter.

### 4.7.2 Representative sampling, sampling error and bias, and the sampling frame

Due to the size of the population and the time constraints in place for this study, it was impractical to conduct the survey on the entire population. Therefore, a sample needed to be selected.

It is important that the selected sample is representative of the population in order to generalise the results. The sample is said to be representative of a population when the average

characteristics of the sample are similar to the average characteristics of the population (Babbie, 2016). The differences which are found between the sample's characteristics and those of the population are referred to as the sampling error (Laher & Botha, 2012). If the sample does not represent the population, it is referred to as a biased sample (Bryman et al., 2014). Due to the sampling technique employed in this study, the selected sample may not be representative of the population. Therefore, a limitation of this study is that the results of the study cannot be generalised to the entire population of South Africa or to the world.

The final aspect in this section is that of the sampling frame. A sampling frame is the list of elements from which a sample is selected (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). While this will be the ideal way of ensuring that the sample is representative, obtaining a list of every individual who attends a health and fitness centre, as well as those who do not, would not have been practical, as the list would range in the hundreds of thousands. It is for this reason that non-probability sampling was used in this study.

### **4.7.3 Sampling techniques**

Two broad types of sampling techniques can be identified, namely, probability (or representative) and non-probability (or judgemental) sampling. These techniques, and the methods involved in each one, are illustrated in Figure 4.6, and will be discussed in the sections that follow.

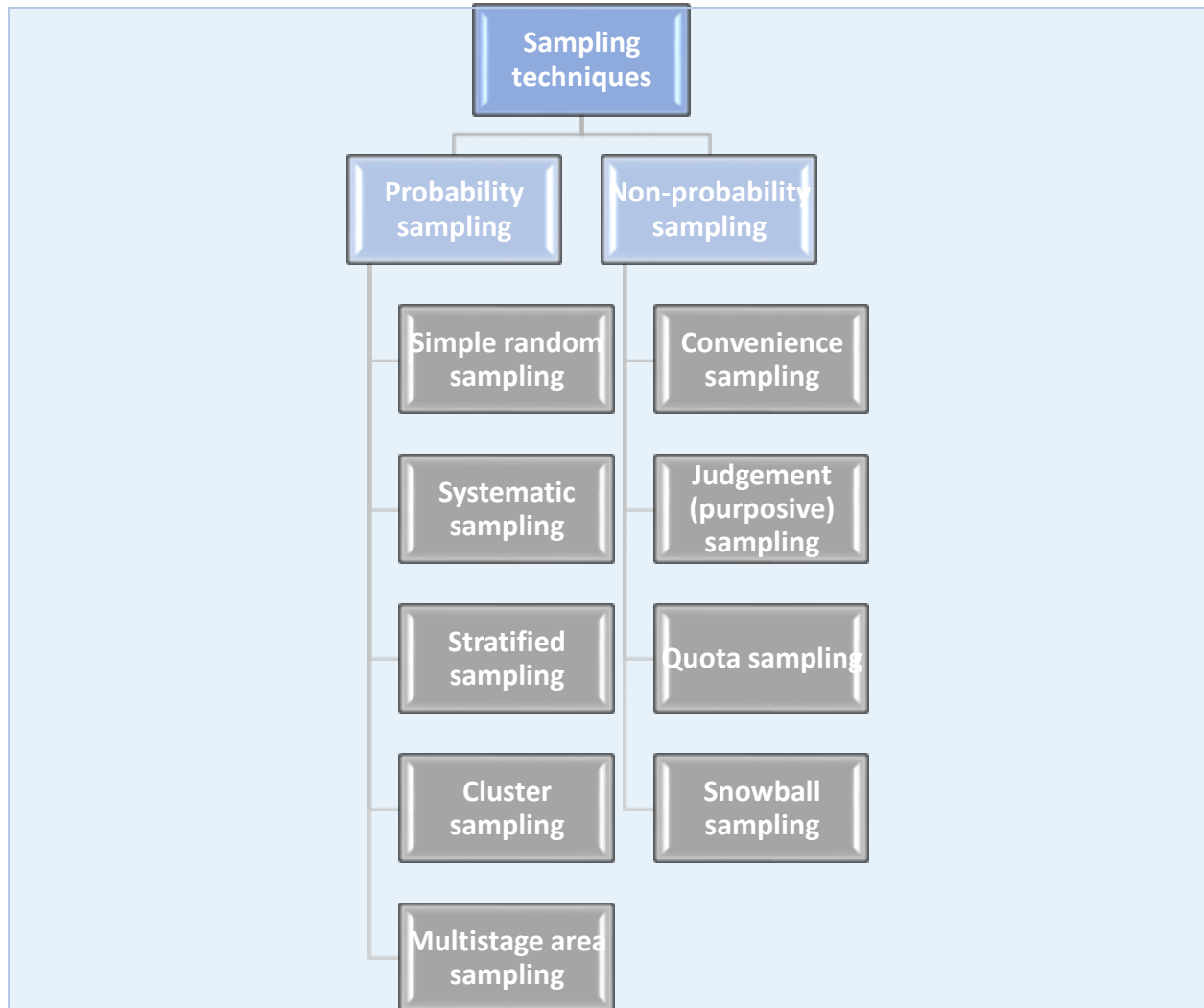


Figure 4.6: Sampling techniques. (Source: Researcher's own composition).

#### 4.7.3.1 *Probability sampling*

Probability sampling involves a controlled random selection procedure where each individual element has an equal, non-zero, chance of being selected as part of the sample (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). This will result in the researcher being able to generalise the findings for the greater population (Bryman et al., 2014). As this process is random, the chances of the sample being biased is eliminated (Zikmund et al., 2009). As shown in Figure 4.6, probability sampling can be achieved with a number of methods, such as simple random sampling, cluster sampling, systematic sampling, or stratified sampling. For this specific study, probability sampling was not



used and, therefore, this method will not be discussed. In the next section, however, the sampling technique employed in this study, namely non-probability sampling, will be discussed.

#### **4.7.3.2 *Non-probability sampling***

Non-probability sampling refers to an arbitrary sample selection process, where the probability of a population member being selected as part of the sample is unknown (Zikmund et al., 2009). While probability sampling may be the ideal technique to use, there are a number of practical reasons to use non-probability sampling. These reasons are as follows:

- Non-probability sampling may satisfactorily meet the sampling objectives, especially if the aim of the research is not to generalise the results for a population.
- Non-probability sampling is easier to carry out and requires less money, time, and planning than probability sampling.
- Non-probability sampling may be the only feasible alternative, especially if it is not possible to contact the entire population due to its size or geographic location. (Adapted from Cooper & Schindler (2014:358–359)).

With these reasons in mind, a non-probability sampling technique was selected for this study. The process for selecting a non-probability technique is depicted in Figure 4.7 and the applicable non-probability sampling methods are discussed in the sections that follow. While many methods of non-probability sampling can be identified, only those that are applicable to this study will be discussed.

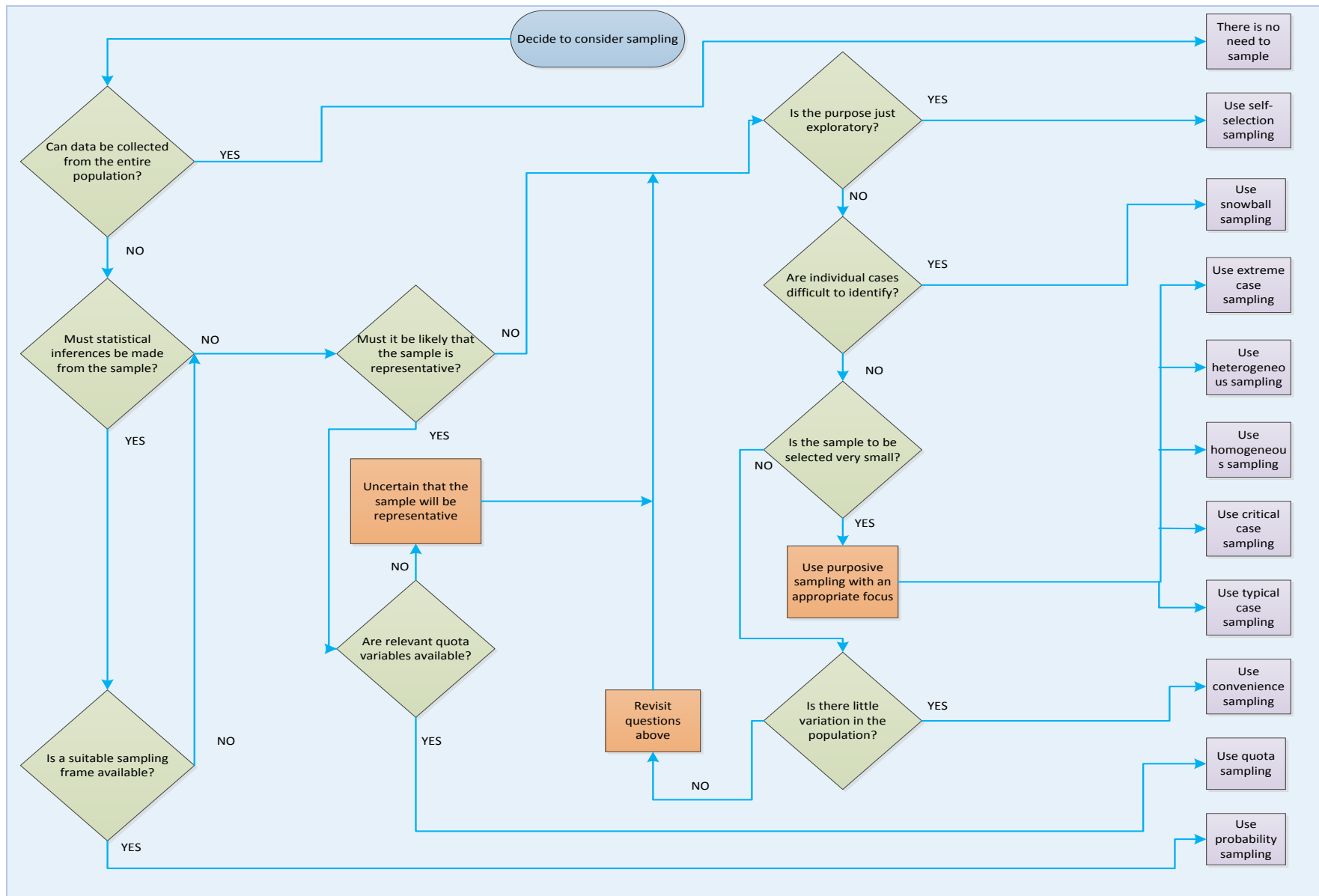


Figure 4.7: Selecting a non-probability sampling technique. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009:234)).

### ***Convenience sampling***

Convenience sampling, also referred to as haphazard or accidental sampling, occurs when a researcher selects any individual who is readily available to be a part of the sample (Laher & Botha, 2012). While this may be the most unreliable sampling method, as it is prone to sample bias, it is one of the easiest and cheapest to conduct (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009; Cooper & Schindler, 2014). In this study, convenience sampling was used to begin the sample selection, as the researcher approached those individuals who are known either to attend or not to attend a health and fitness centre and who were prepared to partake in the study. This was done by means of email. In addition, the survey was posted on social media platforms (such as Facebook), where individuals who were online at the time of posting had the option to complete the survey anonymously. Thereafter, snowball sampling was used.

### ***Snowball sampling***

Snowball sampling is a form of convenience sampling whereby the researcher approaches a small number of individuals in the population and then uses these individuals to make contact with other individuals (Bryman et al., 2014), especially as members of the population might be difficult to locate (Babbie, 2016). Therefore, the steps in snowball sampling are as follows:

1. Make contact with a few individuals in the population.
2. Ask these individuals to identify other individuals.
3. Ask the new individuals to identify further new individuals.
4. Stop when either no new individuals can be identified or the sample is large enough.

(Adapted from Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009:240)).

Snowball sampling was used in this study to obtain a sample of those individuals who attend, or do not attend, a health and fitness centre. As mentioned above, convenience sampling was used first as a starting point to establish a sample. Those individuals were then asked to identify other possible participants that would be willing to partake in the study, and so the process continued. The same process was applied to the survey posted on social media. Individuals were asked to “share” the survey with their respective online friends, who could then “share” it with their friends and so forth. In this way, the researcher aimed to achieve an appropriate sample size.

#### **4.7.4 Sample size**

The size of a sample is dependent on a number of factors including the time and costs available, the type of questions asked, the choice of method employed, and the overall size of the population (Laher & Botha, 2012; Bryman et al., 2014). As such, no set rule exists on the ideal size of the sample.

Van Zyl (2014:106), however, highlights points to keep in mind when determining the size of the sample, namely:

- The larger the sample size, the smaller the sampling error will be.
- The sample size should be large enough to facilitate the dividing of the sample into various subgroups.
- The sample size should be increased by between 40% and 50% if the surveys are to be mailed to respondents to account for non-responders.
- Do not generate a sample that is too large – accurate and appropriate samples generate better information than samples that are too large.

In terms of this study, a sample size of at least 180 respondents was deemed sufficient. This would comprise of at least 60 female respondents who attend a health and fitness centre, at least 60 male respondents who attend a health and fitness centre, and at least 60 male or female participants that do not attend a health and fitness centre. It was hoped that the sample would be spread among different age groups, ethnicity groups, education levels, and family structures, to give an overall impression of the population, and enable the researcher to develop a consumer typology for health and fitness centres. Furthermore, while 180 respondents was deemed to be sufficient, it was the researcher's aim for the sample size to be larger than anticipated in order to provide more accurate results. The exact sample size and its composition is discussed in Chapter Five of this dissertation.

### **4.8 DATA COLLECTION**

Once the sample has been selected, the focus of the research turns to the choice of research method (data collection method) and observation (collection of data) as shown in Figure 4.1. In this section, the data collection instrument used in this study and the data collection process will be discussed.

### **4.8.1 Data collection instrument**

For this study, a self-completion questionnaire was selected as the instrument to collect data. Self-completion, or self-administered, questionnaires are mailed, hand-delivered, or posted online, with the aim that respondents will answer the questions themselves, and return the completed questionnaire to the researcher as requested (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2011). For this research, questionnaires were emailed to participants and the link was shared on social media.

#### **4.8.1.1 Instrument development and design**

Mentz (2012:103-104) and Bryman et al. (2014:195–197) identified a number of important principles of effective questionnaire design. These principles were incorporated in the design of the questionnaire used in this study, and are as follows:

- The questionnaire should have a clear title as well as a covering letter explaining the aim of the survey, any ethical considerations, measures to protect the respondent's anonymity and confidentiality, and the basic instructions for completing the questionnaire. This can be seen in Appendix B.
- The wording of the questions should be unambiguous to avoid any misunderstanding. Furthermore, the questions should be short but able to elicit data that is appropriate for analysis.
- A vertical format for answering the questions is preferable to the horizontal format as this minimises any confusion or misplaced answers.
- Specific instructions for the questions must be provided, for example, "*Circle the appropriate option*" or "*Select only one option*".
- Do not split the question from its answers.

#### **4.8.1.2 Characteristics of a self-completion questionnaire**

The self-completion questionnaire has numerous advantages, such as:

- Self-completing questionnaires cost less money and time to administer, and thus they can reach a larger geographical area.

- The questionnaire is consistent as there is no interviewer variability (for example, the order and manner in which the interviewer asks questions) or interviewer bias.
- It is convenient for the respondents as they can answer the questions at their own pace and at a time that suits them. This is especially true for the questionnaires that are posted on social media or emailed to individuals.
- The questionnaire is perceived to be more anonymous than a personal interview, as the researcher will have no means of identifying the respondents. (Adapted from Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler (2011:213) and Bryman et al. (2014:192)).

While the self-completing questionnaire has several advantages, it is not without its disadvantages, namely:

- There is no one available to assist the respondent should the respondent not understand a question. Furthermore, a researcher is not able to probe a respondent to elaborate on a particular answer. This could result in the loss of valuable information.
- The questionnaire cannot be too long or contain too many open-ended questions, as respondents may be reluctant to answer such a questionnaire.
- There is no control over who answers the questions. In this study, for example, the researcher had no way of knowing if the person who answered that they do not attend a health and fitness centre, but instead follows their own exercise routine at home three times a week, actually does as they say.
- There is a greater risk of receiving incomplete or incorrectly completed questionnaires. To minimise this risk, the questionnaire was developed in such a way that every question had to be answered before the respondent could move on to the next section.
- Questionnaires typically result in a lower response rate, which may lead to the results being biased or skewed for the population. (Adapted from Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler (2011:213) and Bryman et al. (2014:193)).

#### **4.8.1.3 Question content and format**

Two types of questions can be found in a questionnaire, namely, open-ended questions and closed-ended questions. These types of questions are discussed in the sections that follow.

### ***Open-ended questions***

Open-ended questions are designed to encourage respondents to provide their own answers to a given question (Mentz, 2012). These questions could provide the researcher with in-depth information on the topic (Babbie, 2016).

### ***Closed-ended questions***

Closed-ended questions require the respondent to select an answer from a pre-populated list provided by the researcher, and are easier to process than open-ended questions (Babbie, 2016).

The advantages and disadvantages of open-ended and closed-ended questions are shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: The advantages and disadvantages of open- and closed-ended questions.**

<b>Question Type</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<b>Open-ended questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allows for an unlimited number of answers.</li><li>• Responses can be clarified by the respondent.</li><li>• An in-depth exploration of a topic is possible.</li><li>• Allows for an insight into the respondent's thinking process.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Answers with varying levels of detail can be provided.</li><li>• The answers may be irrelevant or not answer the questions.</li><li>• It requires more time and effort on the part of the respondent, and the respondent may feel intimidated.</li><li>• More time for data analysis is required.</li></ul>
<b>Closed-ended questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions are quick and easy to answer.</li><li>• Answers can be easily and quickly compared and analysed.</li><li>• The response choices can make the questions clearer.</li><li>• The study is easy to replicate.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Respondents with no opinion on the matter may respond anyway.</li><li>• Respondents may feel constrained by the answer choices.</li><li>• Too many choices may be confusing.</li><li>• Fine distinctions in answers may be lost as no in-depth information can be provided.</li></ul>

**Source: Adapted from Mentz (2012:109).**

In Table 4.8, the content and format of the specific questions asked in the questionnaire are discussed. The final questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

**Table 4.8: The content and format of the questions used in the questionnaire.**

Question content	Section of the questionnaire	Question format
<p><b>Biographical information.</b></p> <p>Questions related to the age, gender, marital status, family and home life, education, employment, and geographical region of the respondents were asked. This section was compulsory for all respondents.</p>	Section A	Seven closed-ended questions were asked. Questions 4 and 5 had an “Other” option which allowed respondents to provide their own responses if necessary.
<p><b>Attitudes towards health and fitness.</b></p> <p>This section comprised a number of questions designed to determine the respondent’s attitudes towards health and fitness in general. It included questions such as “Exercise is fun” and “I perceive exercise to be unavoidable” among others. This section was compulsory for all respondents.</p>	Section B	Twenty-three closed-ended questions were asked in this section. The respondents had to answer the questions on a five-point Likert Scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.
<p><b>Gym and fitness centre experience.</b></p> <p>This section was designed specifically for those respondents who attend a health and fitness centre. These questions related specifically to the respondent’s experience of, and behaviours in, a health and fitness centre. Among others, questions such as “How much time do you spend in the gym”, “What activities do you do”, “What aspect of your gym do you like the most or the least”, and “What would the main reason be for cancelling your gym membership” were asked of the respondents.</p>	Section C	Twenty-one closed-ended questions were asked in this section. The majority of the questions did have an “Other” option which allowed the participants to provide their own answers if need be.
<p><b>Reasons for non-attendance.</b></p> <p>This section was designed only for those respondents who did not have a membership to a health and fitness centre. These questions included “What is the main reason for not attending a health and fitness centre”, “What other forms of exercise or sport do you do”, and “What reasons would get you to become a member of a gym” among others. These questions were designed specifically to identify why individuals do not attend a health and fitness centre, and what reasons, if any, would get them to join a health and fitness centre.</p>	Section D	Eight closed-ended questions were asked. Four of these questions had an “Other” option for respondents to provide their own answers if necessary.

**Source: Researcher’s own composition.**



## **4.8.2 Data collection and preparation**

Once the instrument has been developed, the focus then turns to the collection and preparation of the data. The data received from the questionnaires is in a raw form and will not assist in answering the research questions. This raw data needs to be edited, coded and captured in order for it to become usable information that will answer the research questions and satisfy the research objectives (Zikmund et al., 2009). This process is discussed in the sections that follow.

### **4.8.2.1 Data editing**

Data editing is done to detect any omissions or errors in the collected raw data to ensure that the raw data is accurate, complete and consistent (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). For example, if a respondent selected two boxes instead of the required one box only, the editing process will identify this error and correct it if possible, before the data is entered on a computer (Zikmund et al., 2009). This was foreseen not to be too much of an issue as the questionnaire was designed in such a way that the possibility of any errors or omissions was minimised. Once the editing process is complete, the data can then be coded.

### **4.8.2.2 Data coding**

The transformation of the raw data into a format that is suitable for analysis is referred to as data coding (van Zyl, 2014). Coding is defined by Cooper and Schindler (2014) as the assigning of numerical values, letters or symbols in order to group responses into a number of categories. This could include for example allocating “M” for male respondents and “F” for female respondents. Coding had to be done by the researcher to ensure that the SPSS V25 software package could use the data in order to conduct the analysis.

### **4.8.2.3 Data capturing**

The final phase in the data collection process is data capturing or data entry. During this phase, the information that has been gathered is converted to a medium suitable for viewing and manipulation (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). This includes the use of statistical programmes such as SPSS V25, which was used to analyse the data in this study.

## **4.9 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis is defined as the “application of reasoning to understand the data that has been gathered” (Zikmund et al., 2009:70). Data analysis in quantitative research can be categorised as descriptive statistical analysis and inferential statistical analysis, each with their own sub-categories of analysis.

### **4.9.1 Descriptive statistical analysis**

Descriptive statistics are used to summarise and describe the information that has been gathered both numerically and graphically (Mentz & Botha, 2012a). This includes measures of variability, measures of central tendency, and the graphical representation of the data. These concepts are briefly discussed below. The practical application of these concepts, as they apply to this study, can be found in Chapter Five of this dissertation.

#### **4.9.1.1 *Measures of central tendency***

Measures of central tendency aim to use one score to describe all of the scores (Mentz & Botha 2012a), and is determined through three concepts, namely, the mode, median and the mean. The mode refers to that attribute which occurs most frequently, the median is the middle attribute in a list, and the mean refers to the average of the data (Mentz & Botha, 2012a; Babbie, 2016). Measures of central tendency and variability are often referred to as univariate data as they only measure a single variable (Mentz & Botha, 2012a).

#### **4.9.1.2 *Measures of variability***

The measure of variability shows how the scores differ from one score to another (Mentz & Botha, 2012a), and is also referred to as dispersion or spread (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). These measures include variance, standard deviation, and range. Variance measures how far an attribute is from the mean. The standard deviation is the square root of the variance and measures how far from the average the values typically are and, finally, the range refers to the difference between the highest and lowest values in the distribution (Mentz & Botha, 2012a; Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Bryman et al., 2014).

#### **4.9.1.3 Graphical representation of the data**

Complex data can be more easily understood if represented by means of graphs and tables. The most common graphical representations of data include the development of a frequency table, which shows how often a score occurs, histograms, bar charts, and pie charts (Mentz & Botha, 2012a; Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

The measurement of central tendency, the measurement of variance, and the graphical representation of the data, are all methods involved in descriptive statistical analysis. The results of these tests can be found in Chapter Five of this dissertation. Once the descriptive statistics have been analysed, the researcher then focuses on the inferential statistical analysis.

### **4.9.2 Inferential statistical analysis**

Inferential statistics is the second category of statistical analysis and is defined by Babbie (2016:460) as “the statistical measures used for making inferences from findings based on sample observations to some larger population”. Inferential statistics are used to test hypotheses and include tests to measure statistical significance (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Babbie, 2016). In this study, exploratory factor analysis, two-step cluster analysis, chi-squared tests and cross tabulations, T-tests, and logistic regressions were used.

#### **4.9.2.1 Exploratory factor analysis**

Factor analysis is defined by Babbie (2016:473) as “a complex algebraic method used to discover patterns among the variations in values of several variables”. Furthermore, factor analysis can be described as a technique that explains how a large number of variables can be represented by a smaller number of underlying factors which share common characteristics (Pett, Lackey & Sullivan, 2011; Motta, 2018). Factor analysis presents the data in a manner that can easily be interpreted and allows the reader to know which variable influenced which factor (Babbie, 2016).

Two types of factor analysis can be identified, namely exploratory, and confirmatory factor analysis. Exploratory factor analysis is used when the number of factors needed to explain the interrelatedness of the variables is unknown and should be explored by the researcher (Pett, Lackey & Sullivan, 2011). In comparison, confirmatory factor analysis is used to determine how adequate the theorised factors are for the data in question (Pett, Lackey & Sullivan, 2011). As it

was unknown what factors would be used before the analysis was done, exploratory factor analysis was used for this study.

#### **4.9.2.2 *Two-step cluster analysis***

Cluster analysis was historically defined by Aldenderfer and Blashfield (1984:7) as a “multivariate statistical procedure that attempts to reorganise a data set into relatively homogenous groups”. Cluster analysis is, therefore, a technique used to group results and observations into clusters, with the intention of providing a set of associations that exist between the groupings (Allen, 2017). It aims to “maximise the homogeneity within the cluster, while maximising the heterogeneity between the clusters” (Mazzocchi, 2011:266). In other words, cluster analysis seeks to have the variables within each cluster be as similar as possible, while having the clusters be as different from each other as possible. In this study, two distinct clusters were identified for those respondents who attend a gym, and a further two distinct clusters were identified for those respondents who do not attend a gym.

#### **4.9.2.3 *Chi-square tests and cross-tabulations***

A chi-squared test is used to explore the relationship between two categorical variables, and is based on a cross-tabulation table (Pallant, 2010). In this study, cross-tabulations and chi-square tests were used to test the relationships between the different identified clusters and the activities and motives for joining or not joining a gym.

#### **4.9.2.4 *T-test***

A T-test is used to compare the mean score between two groups or two sets of data (Pallant, 2010). Furthermore, it is a measure used to determine the “statistical significance in group means” (Babbie, 2016:468). Two types of T-test can be used, namely, the paired sample T-test and the independent T-test. The paired sample T-test is used to measure the same sample at different points in time, while the independent T-test is used to compare the scores of two different groups at the same point in time (Pallant, 2010). As this is a cross-sectional study, and two distinct clusters could be formed from the data set, an independent T-test was conducted.

#### **4.9.2.5 Binomial logistic regression**

The final inferential statistical analysis applicable to this study is binomial logistic regression. Binomial logistic regression is used to “predict categorical outcomes with two or more categories” (Pallant, 2010:168). It is used to analyse the relationship between a dependent variable to one or more independent variables (Menard, 2012).

In this section, the different descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were discussed. The actual analysis of the data using these various techniques is shown in Chapter Five of this dissertation. In the next section, the attention shifts to the reliability and validity of the instrument and the study.

### **4.10 MEASURES TO ENSURE THE VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE DATA**

When conducting quantitative research, it is important that the measurement instrument is both valid and reliable in order to ensure that the results and conclusions are accurate (Bryman et al., 2014; van Zyl, 2014). The researcher ensured that the instrument used to gather data for this study was both valid and reliable. These two concepts are discussed in the following sections.

#### **4.10.1 Validity**

Validity refers to a measure precisely reflecting the concept it is supposed to be measuring (Babbie, 2016). In other words, an instrument has validity if it produces accurate results and represents a concept truthfully (Zikmund et al., 2009). When establishing validity, four basic approaches can be used, namely:

- **Face validity:** This means that the instrument should appear to reflect the concept which is being measured (Zikmund et al., 2009; Bryman et al., 2014; Babbie, 2016).
- **Content validity:** This refers to a measure of how well the content of an item represents the “universe of items from which it is drawn” (van Zyl, 2014:124). In other words, it refers to the degree to which an item covers the field of interest (Zikmund et al., 2009).
- **Criterion validity:** Criterion validity refers to how well the instrument can estimate current performance (concurrent validity) or predict future performance (predictive validity) (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; van Zyl, 2014).

- **Construct validity:** Construct validity measures the degree to which the instrument measures the underlying theoretical variable, in other words, if the test actually is measuring what it was designed to measure (Bryman et al., 2014; van Zyl, 2014).

These concepts were tested during the development of the questionnaire and during the pilot testing phase of the questionnaire development in order to ensure that the final data collection instrument was valid.

#### 4.10.2 Reliability

Reliability implies that a particular technique, when applied repeatedly to the same object, will produce the same outcome each time (Babbie, 2016). In other words, it refers to the “consistency of a measure of a concept” (Bryman et al., 2014:36). Two main methods for determining the reliability of an instrument can be identified, namely:

- **Test-retest method:** This involves re-administering the same test to the same participants at different periods in time (Babbie, 2016). This can be achieved, for example, through administering a pilot test of the questionnaire prior to distributing the final questionnaire.
- **Internal consistency:** This measures the homogeneity of the instrument in that each indicator of a concept relates to, and tests, the same concept (Zikmund et al., 2009). This can be measured through the split-half method, Cronbach’s alpha, or the coefficient alpha.

By subjecting the instrument to these measures, the researcher aims to have a final data collection instrument that is reliable.

### 4.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS: A NOTE

Ethics are defined by Cooper and Schindler (2014:28) as the “standards of behaviour that guide the moral choices of behaviour and the relationships with others”. This definition applies to both the conduct of the researcher and for the collection of data. Ethical clearance for this study was obtained from Unisa’s Department of Business Management Research Ethics Committee prior to the data being collected. A copy of this clearance certificate can be found in Appendix A. Furthermore, the researcher abided by all the rules as set out in the Ethical Policies and

Procedures of the University of South Africa. During this study, all ethical requirements were adhered to when collecting data from the participants, and in the analysis thereof. The main requirements are briefly discussed in the sections below.

### ***Voluntary participation***

All participation in the research by the participants should be voluntary and, as far as possible, not be an intrusion into people's lives (Babbie, 2016). Furthermore, participants should not be coerced into partaking in the research. This also implies that all participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving reasons and without negative consequences.

### ***No harm to participants***

The avoidance of harm is seen as the key component in research ethics (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). It implies that a participant should not be subject to physical, psychological or mental harm (Babbie, 2016), and includes invoking anxiety or stress in the participants. A checklist for reducing the likelihood of causing harm to participants was suggested by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009:186) and comprises the following three elements:

- Is the research going to have a negative impact on the well-being of the participants?
- Have the potential risks to the participant partaking in the research been identified?
- Can the research be justified?

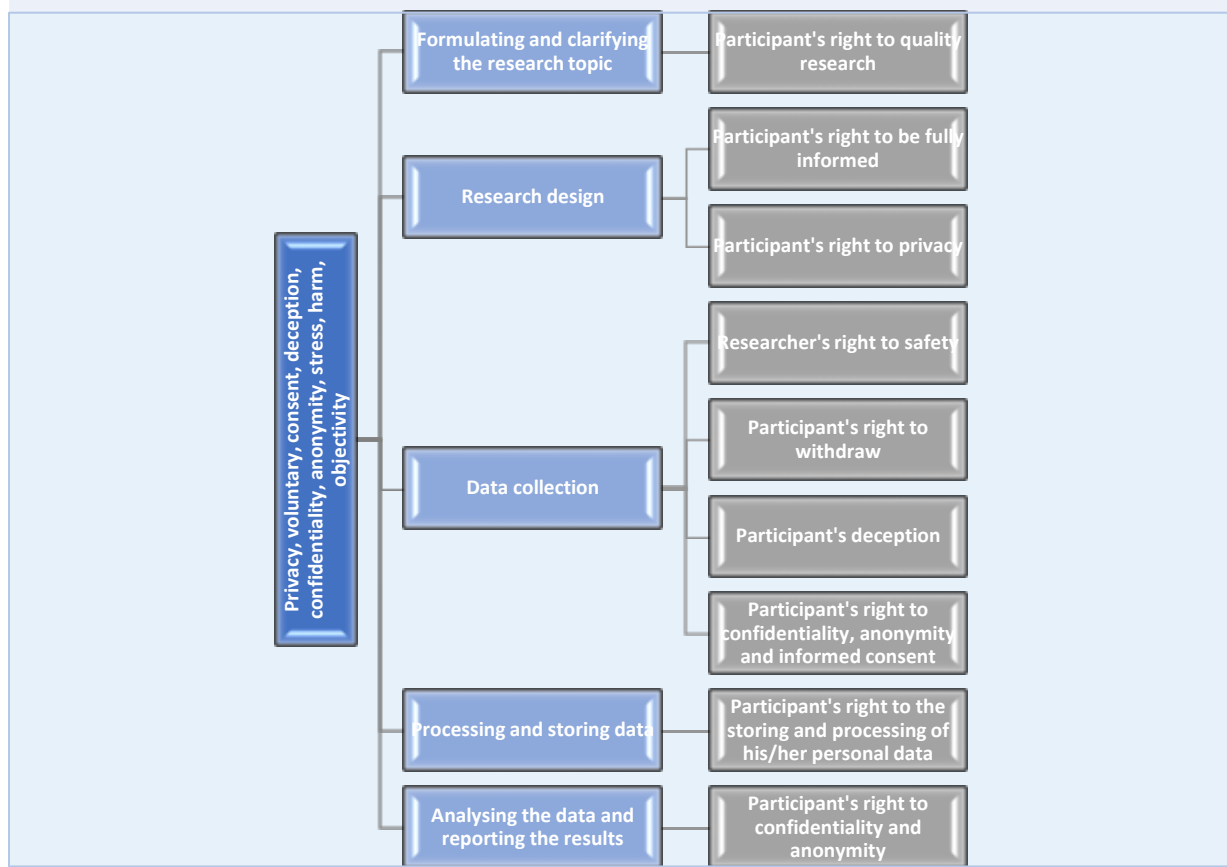
### ***Anonymity and confidentiality***

Anonymity occurs when a participant cannot be identified by the researcher, or any other person, based on the responses they give, while confidentiality implies that the information received by the researcher will not be made public (Babbie, 2016). This implies that the participant's personal information will not be shared, and that the person will not be victimised for partaking in the study (Bryman et al., 2014).

### ***Informed consent***

Obtaining full and informed consent of the participants is a crucial aspect in data collection. The researcher must ensure that the procedures of the proposed research design are fully disclosed and explained to the participants before requesting permission to carry out the study (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Informed consent is the personal right of an individual to agree to participate in a study after understanding the entire research process and its possible consequences (Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012).

The requirements mentioned above are just some of the most important ethical requirements that must be taken into consideration during the data collection process. However, ethical issues are found at every stage of the research process, as shown in Figure 4.8, and were adhered to and addressed throughout this study.



**Figure 4.8: Ethical issues at different stages of research. (Adapted from Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009:188)).**

## 4.12 CONCLUSION

Chapters One, Two and Three, dealt with the theoretical background to this study. In this chapter, attention was paid to the research methodology employed in this study. This chapter began with a discussion on the research process and research design, as well as defining some of the more complex terminology found in research. The various research descriptors were then discussed, paying close attention to those descriptors that were applicable to this study. The focus then shifted to the research approach followed in this study, namely, the quantitative approach. Following this, the sampling design, data collection techniques, and data analysis techniques



applicable to this study were explored. The chapter concluded with a discussion of validity and reliability, as well as ethical considerations, to be abided by throughout this research. In the next chapter, the descriptive and inferential statistical analyses of the primary data of this study were conducted, and the results thereof are discussed.

# **CHAPTER 5**

## **DESCRIPTIVE AND INFERENTIAL DATA ANALYSIS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The last four chapters of the dissertation have been concerned with the theoretical aspects of this study, namely the literature review and the research methodology. In this chapter, the researcher will report on the actual analysis of the primary data obtained from the survey. As this was a quantitative study, descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the primary data received through a survey. This chapter will commence with a brief discussion on how the data collection took place, followed by a thorough analysis of the descriptive statistics and the inferential statistics of this research.

### **5.2 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE DATA COLLECTION PROCESS**

Primary data was collected from the respondents by means of a self-designed online survey. The survey was designed on Google Docs and the link to the survey was sent to the respondents via email and through Facebook. As mentioned in Section 4.7.3.2 of the previous chapter, convenience sampling and snowball sampling were utilised in this study to collect data from the respondents.

Once the researcher had developed the survey and ethical clearance had been obtained, a pilot study of 20 respondents was conducted. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine whether the survey was accessible to the respondents, to rectify any spelling, grammar, or technical concerns, and to assist in ensuring that the data collection instrument was valid.

Once the pilot study was conducted, and the researcher was satisfied that the identified concerns were rectified, the actual data collection process began. Data was collected in the months of October and November of 2017. Convenience sampling was initially used to collect the data, as the survey was sent via email to respondents whom the researcher identified as either gym members or non-gym members. Thereafter, snowball sampling was used as these respondents were requested to forward the survey to other possible respondents. The survey was further posted on Facebook to attract more respondents. In total, 209 responses were received.

## 5.3 STRUCTURE OF THIS CHAPTER

The responses were analysed in two phases, namely the descriptive analysis and inferential analysis, with the help of the SPSS V25 statistical software package. The structure of this chapter, and how the analyses were used to achieve the research objectives are diagrammatically displayed in Figure 5.1.

As shown in Figure 5.1, the descriptive analysis, exploratory factor analysis, cluster analysis of the gym members, and the T-test, were used to develop an overall profile of gym members. This assisted in answering the primary research objective.

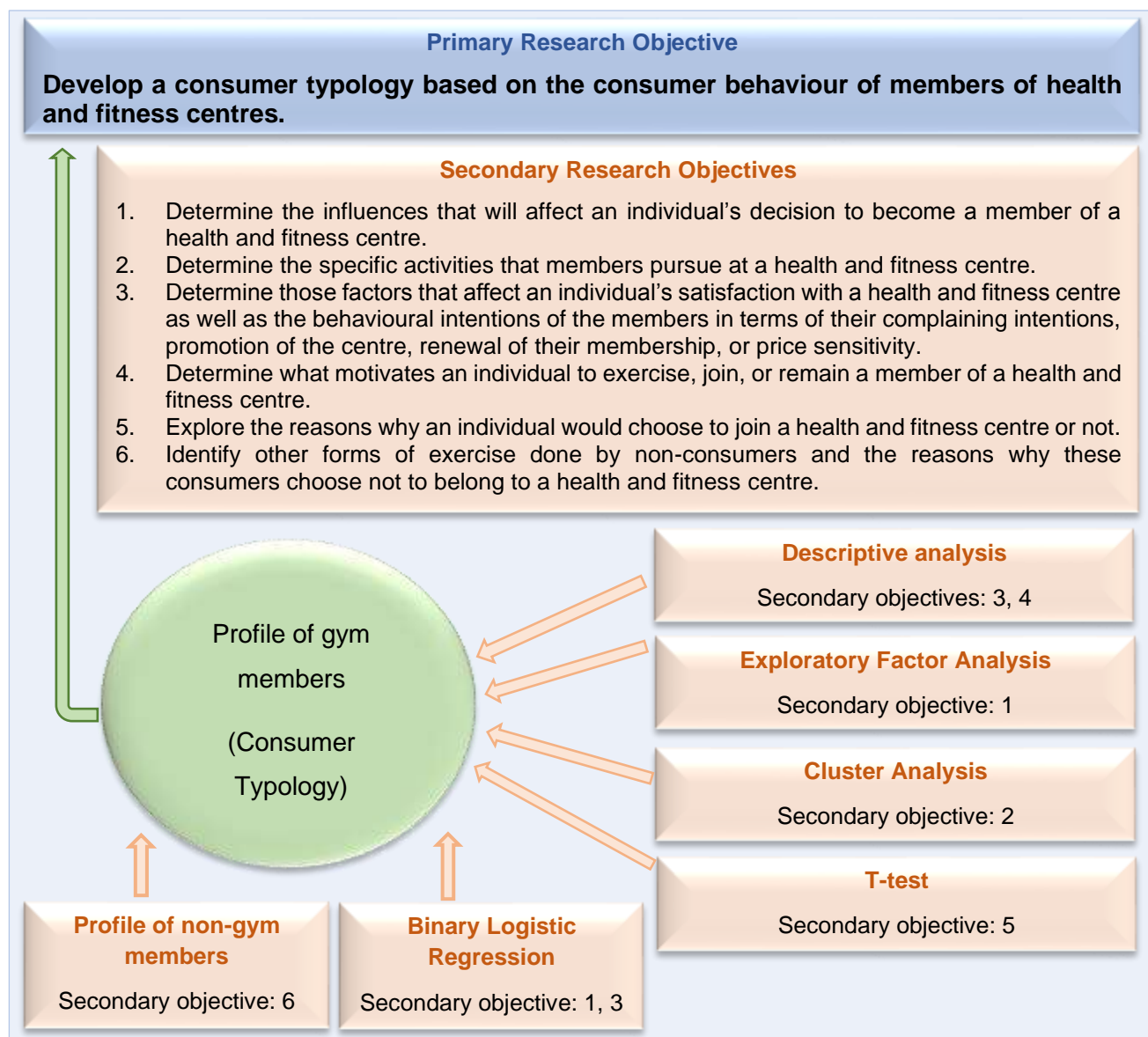


Figure 5.1: Structure of Chapter Five. (Source: Researcher's own composition).

## **5.4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

Descriptive statistics summarise the data and present “quantitative descriptions” in a controllable, summarised form (Babbie, 2016:451). Descriptive statistics assist in describing the data and can include graphical representations of the data, measures of central tendency, and variability (Mentz & Botha, 2012). The frequency tables which used the original source of the SPSS documentation to present the descriptive analysis can be found in Appendix D or made available on request.

The aim of the descriptive analysis in this study was to describe the respondents in terms of their demographic profile, and to determine the response profile of the respondents with regard to their attitudes to fitness and health, and their reasons for attending or not attending a health and fitness centre.

### **5.4.1 Demographic profile of the respondents**

Section A of the questionnaire required the respondents to indicate their demographic profile. This section comprised seven questions and requested that the respondents indicate their age, gender, marital status, home and family life, employment status, highest level of education, and the province in which they reside. Table 5.1 provides a summary of the demographical information of the respondents and cross-tabulates this information with gym membership.

As is evident from Table 5.1, the majority of the respondents were females (71.3%). In terms of age, marital status, home and family life, and province of residence, the modal categories were between the ages of 20 and 29 (34.9%), married (55%), living with their partners (40.2%), and residing in the Gauteng Province (70.3%). Three quarters (75.1%) were permanently employed on a full-time basis. The respondents that were in possession of a bachelor’s degree (25.9%) were the modal category. This information is further discussed in the sections that follow.

It is important to note that, while the vast majority of the respondents were from Gauteng, this does not reflect the normal population of the province, or any province in South Africa for that matter. With more than 715 000 members in Virgin Active South Africa alone, this study has not even begun to scratch the surface. Due to the time constraints imposed on this study and the impracticality of reaching every individual who attends a health and fitness centre, this study is not representative of the gym-member population in Gauteng or South Africa. Furthermore, it must be noted that the study was skewed in terms of gender, as more female respondents

completed the survey than male respondents. This is not representative of the gym members' population in general.

**Table 5.5: Cross-tabulation of demographics with gym membership (n=209).**

Question	Options	Are you a current member of a gym?		Total	Total Percentage <sup>2</sup>
		No	Yes		
What is your age?	Between 18 and 19 years of age.	0	0	0	0
	Between 20 and 29 years of age.	39	34	73	34.9%
	Between 30 and 39 years of age.	19	33	52	24.9%
	Between 40 and 49 years of age.	12	16	28	13.4%
	Between 50 and 59 years of age.	27	5	32	15.3%
	Between 60 and 70 years of age.	14	10	24	11.5%
What is your gender?	Male	28	32	60	28.7%
	Female	83	66	149	71.3%
What is your marital status?	Single	26	34	60	28.7%
	Married	67	48	115	55%
	Living with partner, but not married	7	11	18	8.6%
	Divorced	9	4	13	6.2%
	Widowed	2	1	3	1.4%
How would you describe your home and family life?	Single, living alone, or in a commune.	19	27	46	22%
	Living with spouse/partner.	47	37	84	40.2%
	Living with spouse/partner and one child.	18	10	28	13.4%

<sup>2</sup> Due to the rounding of the percentages to one decimal place, some of the total percentage values for the questions may not add up to exactly 100%.

	Living with spouse/partner and between two and four children.	9	12	21	10%
	Living with spouse/partner and more than four children.	1	0	1	0.5%
	Living with spouse and other dependents.	1	1	2	1%
	Living with other dependents including parents and siblings.	16	11	27	13%
<b>What is your highest level of education?</b>	Less than Grade 12	0	1	1	0.5%
	Grade 12	20	8	28	13.4%
	Higher Certificate	3	5	8	3.8%
	Diploma	21	13	34	16.3%
	Bachelor's Degree	31	23	54	25.9%
	Honours Degree	22	28	50	23.9%
	Master's Degree	13	18	31	14.8%
	Doctorate Degree	1	1	2	1%
	City & Guilds of London <sup>3</sup>	0	1	1	0.5%
<b>What is your current employment status?</b>	Student	3	4	7	3.4%
	Unemployed	5	2	7	3.4%
	Temporarily employed (including fixed-term contracts).	11	8	19	9.1%
	Permanently employed on a part-time basis.	5	3	8	3.8%
	Permanently employed on a full-time basis.	79	78	157	75.1%
	Retired	8	3	11	5.3%
	Gauteng	82	65	147	70.3%

<sup>3</sup> This qualification was filled in under the "Other" Category and was not a set category from the beginning.

<b>In which province do you currently reside?</b>	Western Cape	9	15	24	11.5%
	KwaZulu-Natal	10	2	12	5.7%
	Mpumalanga	1	4	5	2.4%
	Eastern Cape	0	3	3	1.4%
	Free State	1	2	3	1.4%
	Limpopo	3	0	3	1.4%
	North West	2	1	3	1.4%
	Northern Cape	0	0	0	0
	Outside of South Africa	3	6	9	4.3%

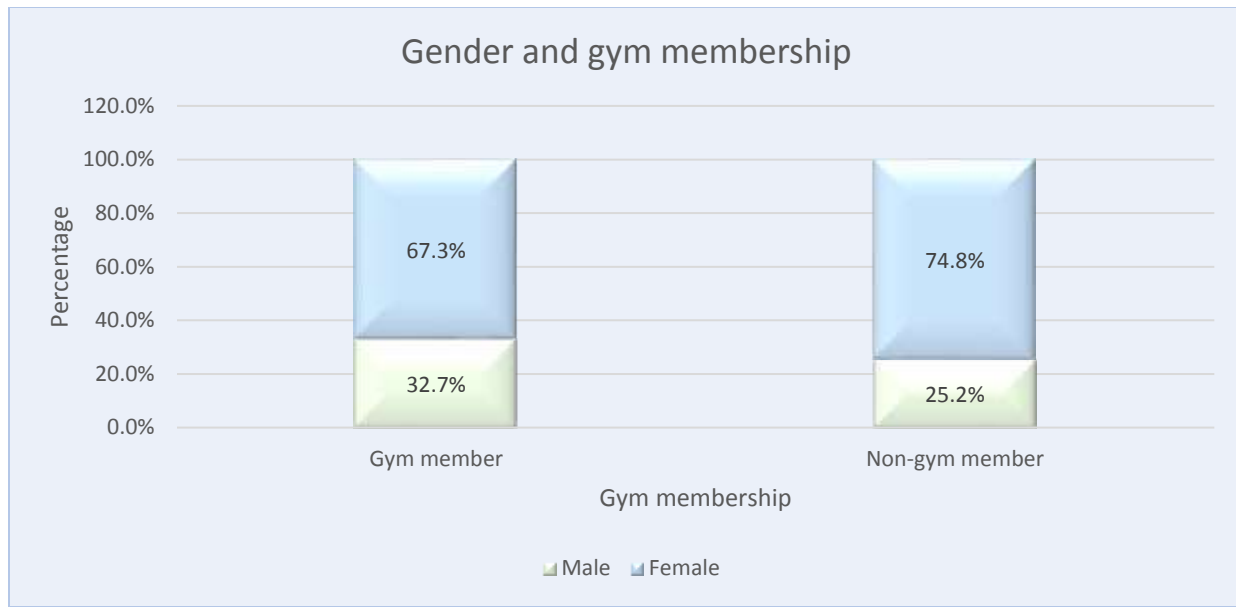
**Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.**

#### **5.4.1.1 Age**

The respondents were aged between 20 and 70 years of age, with the modal category (34.9% of the respondents) representing ages of between 20 and 29. This group is known as Vicenarians and can be classified mainly as Generation Z (born after 1996). Within this group, almost half (46.6%) of the respondents belonged to a gym. Forty-nine respondents (61.3%) between the ages of 30 and 49 belonged to a gym. Of the 15 respondents between the ages of 50 and 70 that belong to a gym, five (33.3%) are between 50 and 60 years, and ten (66.7%) are between 60 and 70 years. Overall, the sample mainly comprised of younger respondents (Generation Y and Generation Z) who were between the ages of 20 and 39 (comprising 59.9% of the sample).

#### **5.4.1.2 Gender**

As is evident in Table 5.1 the vast majority (71.3%) of the respondents were female. Men only represented 28.7% of the total number of respondents. Of those that indicated gym membership (98), 32 (32.7%) were males and 66 (67.3%) were female respondents. More female respondents indicated that they did not belong to a gym than those that did belong to a gym (74.8% (83) versus 67.3% (66) respectively). The lower numbers of female gym members could be attributed to the fact that women often have more domestic duties, such as taking care of their children, as shown in later sections of this analysis. The gender distribution can be seen in Figure 5.2.



**Figure 5.9: Gender and gym membership (n=209).**

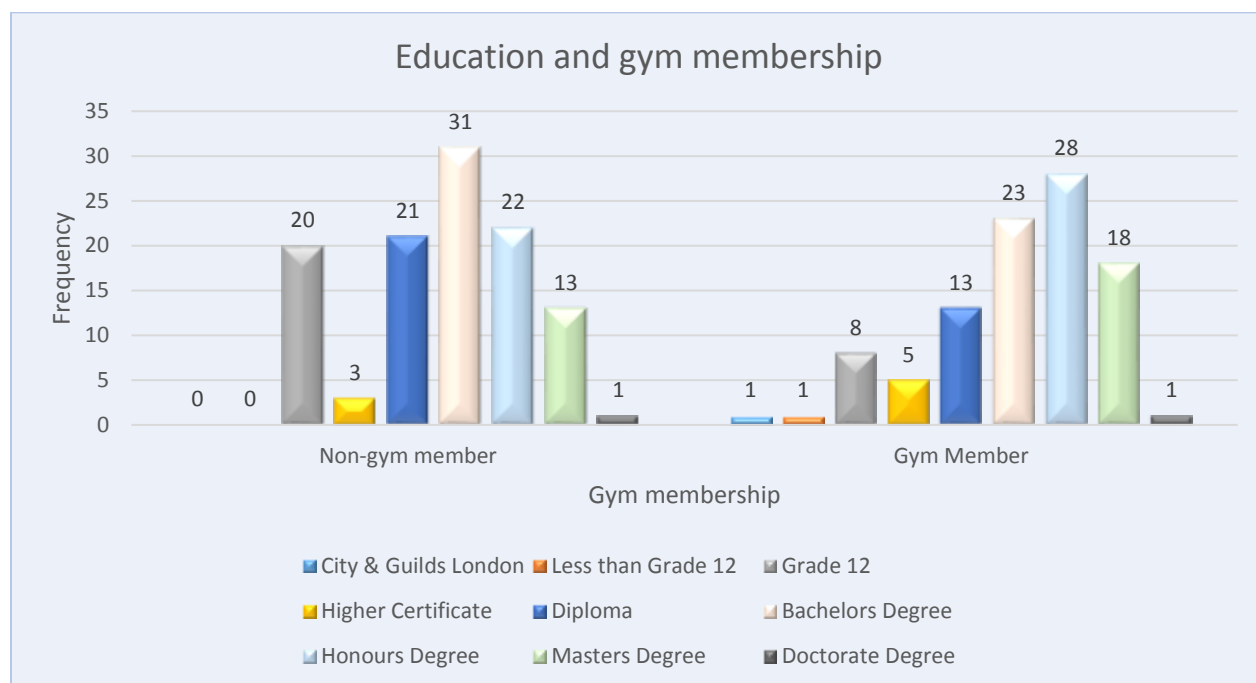
#### **5.4.1.3 Marital status and family life**

More single people belong to a gym than those who do not (34 and 26 respondents, or 56.7% and 43.3%, respectively), while the opposite is true for the married respondents (48 married respondents belong to a gym while 67 married respondents do not belong to a gym, or 41.7% and 58.3% respectively). A possible reason for this could be that single people, and especially those respondents in their early 20s, attend a gym to boost their body confidence, possibly in the hopes of meeting new people or finding a partner (West, 2018). Twenty-eight (56%) of the respondents with children indicated that they do not attend a gym, with only 22 (44%) of them indicating that they do attend a gym. This could be attributed to the fact that parents, especially working parents, have less time for other activities, such as attending a gym, or that they cannot find anyone to look after their children. Furthermore, the issue of affordability can play a role especially since quite a large portion of disposable income goes into raising a family, and not much remains to spend on other activities, such as gym memberships.



#### 5.4.1.4 Highest level of education

The modal category for level of education was a Bachelor's degree (25.9%), followed closely by an Honour's degree (23.9%). A graphical representation of the level of education of the respondents, and whether or not they belong to a gym, can be found in Figure 5.3 below.



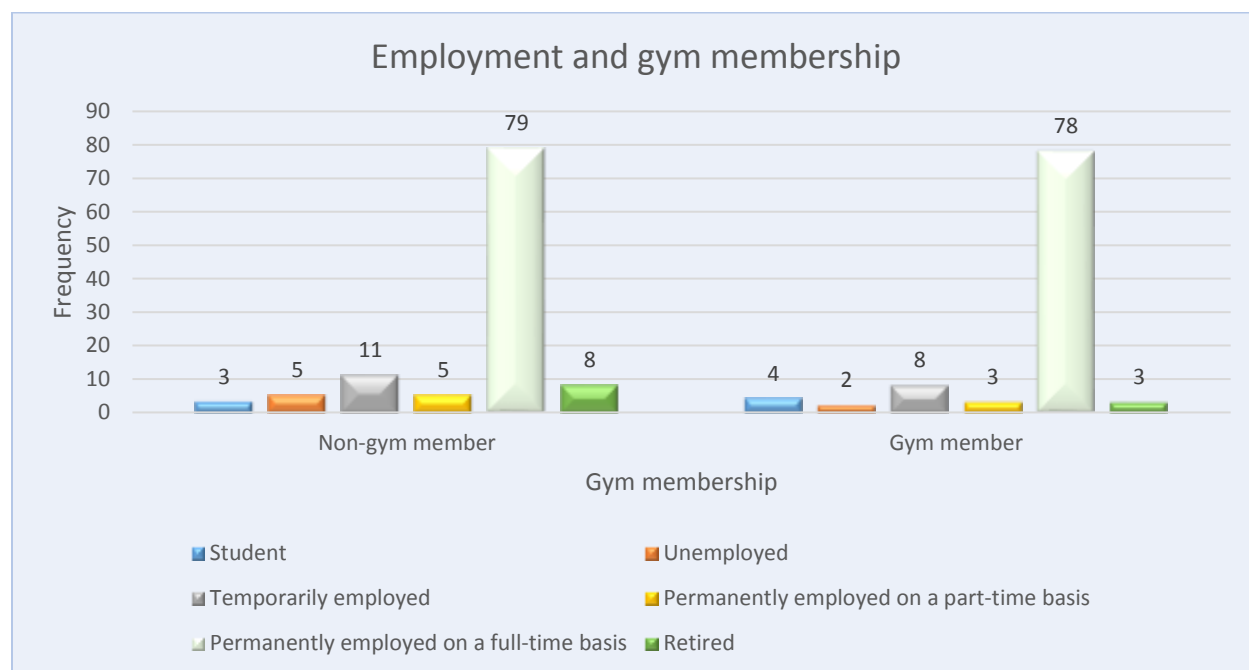
**Figure 5.310: Education and gym membership (n = 209).**

Most respondents with a Diploma (21 respondents or 61.8%) or Bachelor's degree (31 respondents or 57.4%) indicated that they do not attend a gym. However, more respondents with an Honours (28 respondents or 56%) or Master's degree (18 respondents or 58.1%) indicated that they did attend a gym or fitness centre than those who were not members (22 respondents or 44% and 13 respondents or 41.9% respectively). Twenty (71.4%) of the respondents who only have a Matric Certificate indicated that they do not attend a gym. This is in line with the findings of the study conducted by Wicker, Hallman and Breuer (2012).

#### 5.4.1.5 Employment status

Three-quarters (75.1%) of the respondents indicated that they were permanently employed on a full-time basis. The majority of the respondents, who indicated that they were unemployed (five respondents or 71.4% of the unemployed), temporarily employed (11 respondents or 57.9% of the temporarily employed), retired (eight respondents or 72.7% of the retired), or employed on a

part-time basis (five respondents or 62.5% of the part-time employed), also indicated that they were not members of a health and fitness centre. This could be attributed to the fact that people in these categories of employment have less disposable income than people who are permanently employed and, therefore, may have other priorities for their limited income. The respondents that were permanently employed on a full-time basis were more or less equally divided between those who attend a gym and those who do not (49.7% versus 50.3% respectively). This is shown in Figure 5.4.



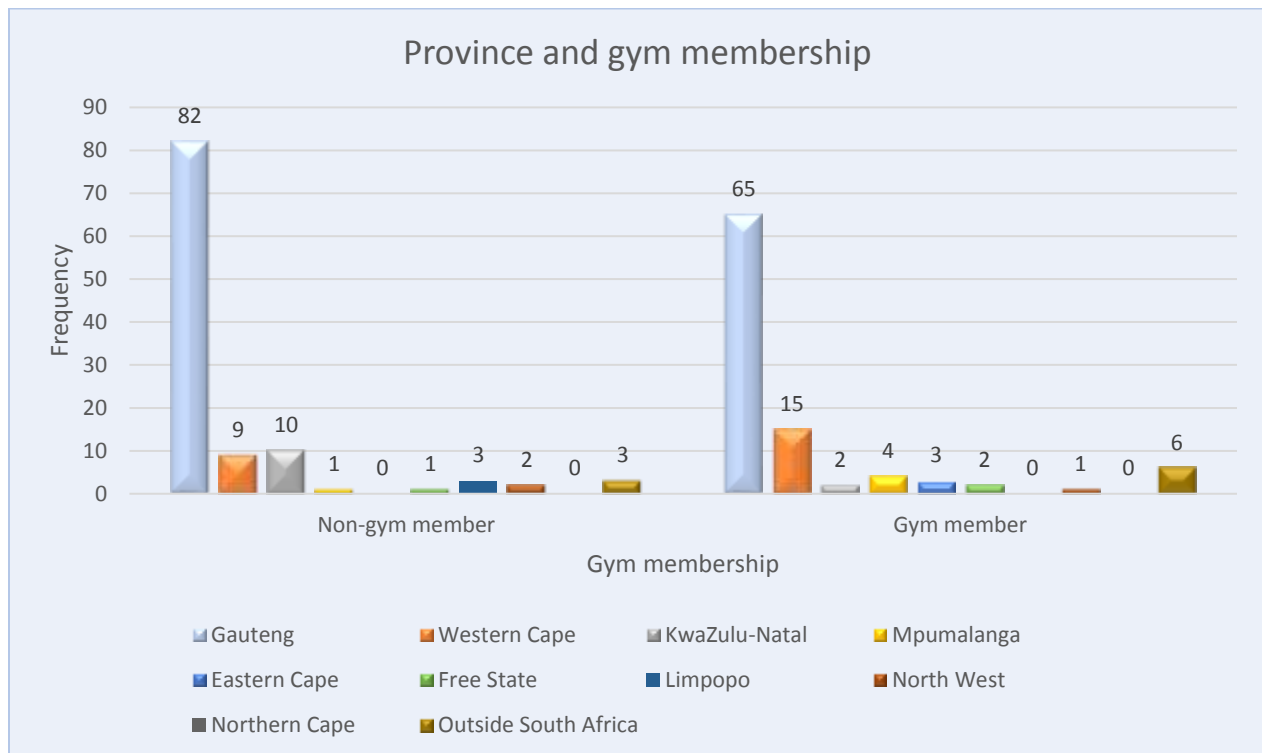
**Figure 5.4: Employment and gym membership (n=209).**

#### **5.4.1.6 Province**

Responses were received from eight of the nine provinces in South Africa, as well as a number of responses from outside of South Africa. The majority of the responses were from Gauteng (147 respondents or 70.3%), followed by the Western Cape (24 respondents or 11.5%) and KwaZulu Natal (12 respondents or 5.7%). Nine respondents (4.3%) came from outside of South Africa. The only province with zero respondents was the Northern Cape.

Forty-four percent (65 of the 147) of the respondents from Gauteng indicated that they attended a gym or fitness centre, while 62.5% of the respondents from the Western Cape were members of a gym. The minority of respondents from KwaZulu-Natal (two respondents or 16.7%) and the

North West (one respondent or 33.3%) belonged to a gym or fitness centre, while none of the respondents from Limpopo indicated that they attend a health and fitness centre. Gym membership was high for the very few respondents in Mpumalanga (four respondents or 80%) and the Free State (two respondents or 66.7%). All three (100%) of the respondents from the Eastern Cape indicated that they attended a health and fitness centre. Of the nine respondents from outside of South Africa, six of them (66.7%) belonged to a gym or fitness centre. This is depicted in Figure 5.5 below.



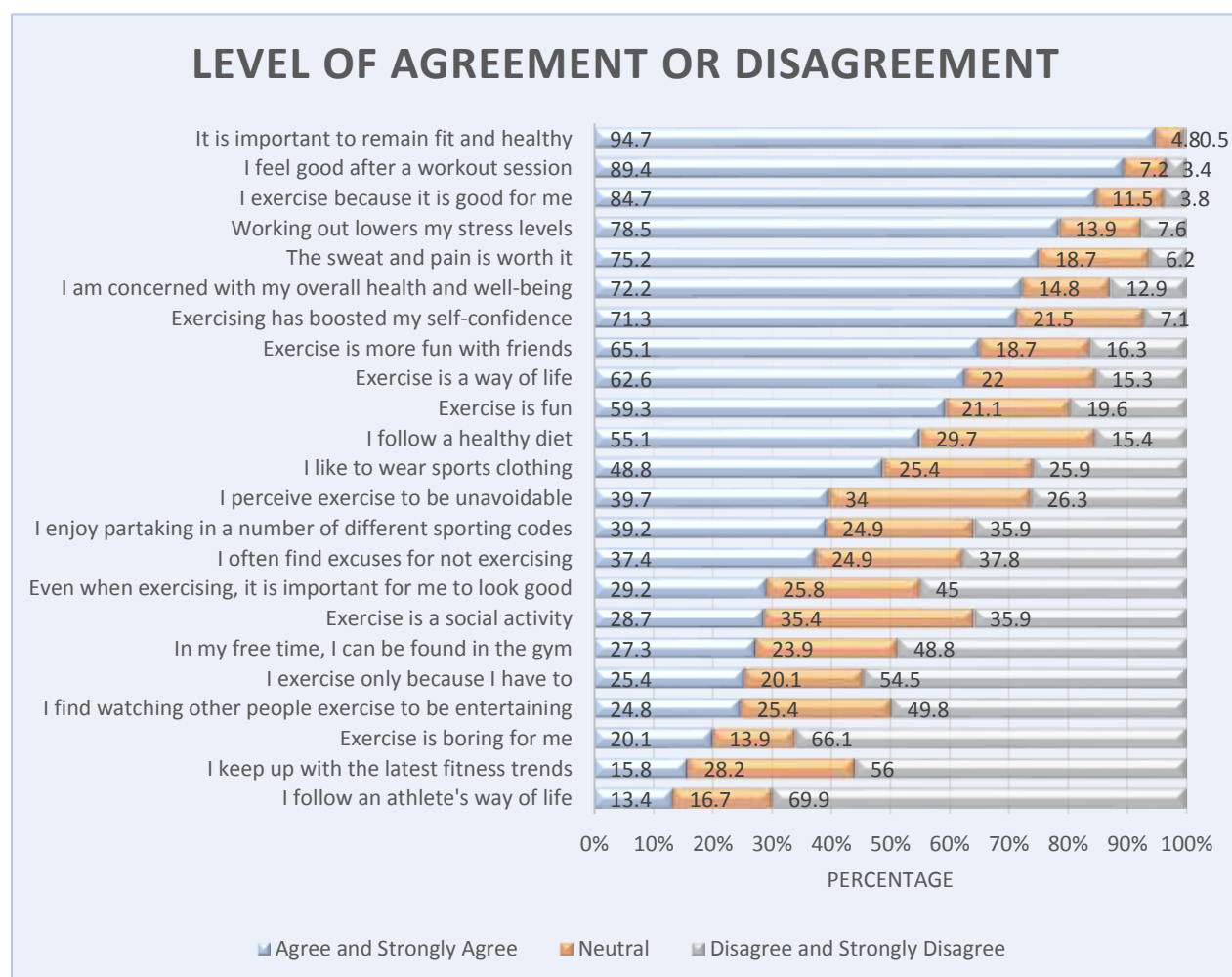
**Figure 5.5: Province and gym membership (n=209).**

In this section, the descriptive statistics of the respondents' demographics were discussed. In the next section, the respondents' attitudes towards health and fitness will be described.

## 5.4.2 Attitudes towards health and fitness

Section B of the questionnaire required the respondents to indicate their attitudes towards health and fitness by means of a five-point Likert type response scale, where "1" was "strongly disagree" and "5" was "strongly agree". This section comprised 23 questions and all of the questions were compulsory for all of the respondents.

For the stacked bar chart in Figure 5.6, the responses were regrouped in three categories. “Agree” and “strongly agree” were grouped together, “neutral” responses as a group, and “disagree” and “strongly disagree” as the third group.



**Figure 5.6: Level of agreement or disagreement with each statement in Section B (n = 209).**

As is evident in Figure 5.6, more than 70% of the respondents, in general, agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

- I feel it is important to remain fit and healthy (94.7%).
- I feel good after a workout session (84.7%).
- Working out tends to lower my stress levels (78.5%).
- The sweat and pain after an exercise session is worth it (75.2%).
- I am concerned with my overall health and well-being and, therefore, I exercise (72.2%).
- Exercising has boosted my self-confidence levels (71.3%).

On the other hand, more than 50% of the respondents, in general, disagreed or strongly disagreed with the following statements:

- I follow an athlete's way of life, in that I follow a specific eating and training plan (69.9%).
- Exercise is boring for me (66.1%).
- I tend to keep up with the latest fitness trends (56%).
- I exercise only because I have to (54.5%).

"I feel it is important to remain fit and healthy" and "I feel good after a workout" emerged as the statements which almost all of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with, while "I follow an athlete's way of life" and "Exercise is boring for me" were the statements that the majority of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with. This implies that the respondents deemed exercise to be an enjoyable activity, but that they do not follow an athlete's way of life.

The respondents were more or less equally divided between agreement, disagreement, and neutral with three of the statements. With these three statements, namely, exercise is a social activity, there are often excuses to not exercise, and that the respondents partake in different sporting codes, there was no clear indication of whether the respondents, in general, agreed or disagreed with the statement.

### **5.4.3 Gym or fitness centre experiences, behaviours and motivations**

Section C of the questionnaire was designed to determine the behaviour and motivations of the respondents who attend a health and fitness centre. The total number of respondents, who attended a gym or fitness centre, was 98. The frequency tables for this section can be found in Appendix D or made available upon request. The descriptive analyses of these questions are detailed in the sections that follow.

#### **5.4.3.1 *Time spent in a gym and length of gym membership***

As shown in Figure 5.7 and Figure 5.8, the majority of the respondents tend to spend between 30 minutes and one hour in the gym (56 respondents or 57.1%) and the majority of the respondents will visit the gym a couple of days a week (67 respondents or 68.4%). Only 16.3% (16 respondents) of the respondents indicated that they visited the gym on a daily basis. Forty-one

respondents (41.8%) indicated that they had belonged to a gym for less than five years, while only 13 respondents (13.3%) were members for longer than ten years.

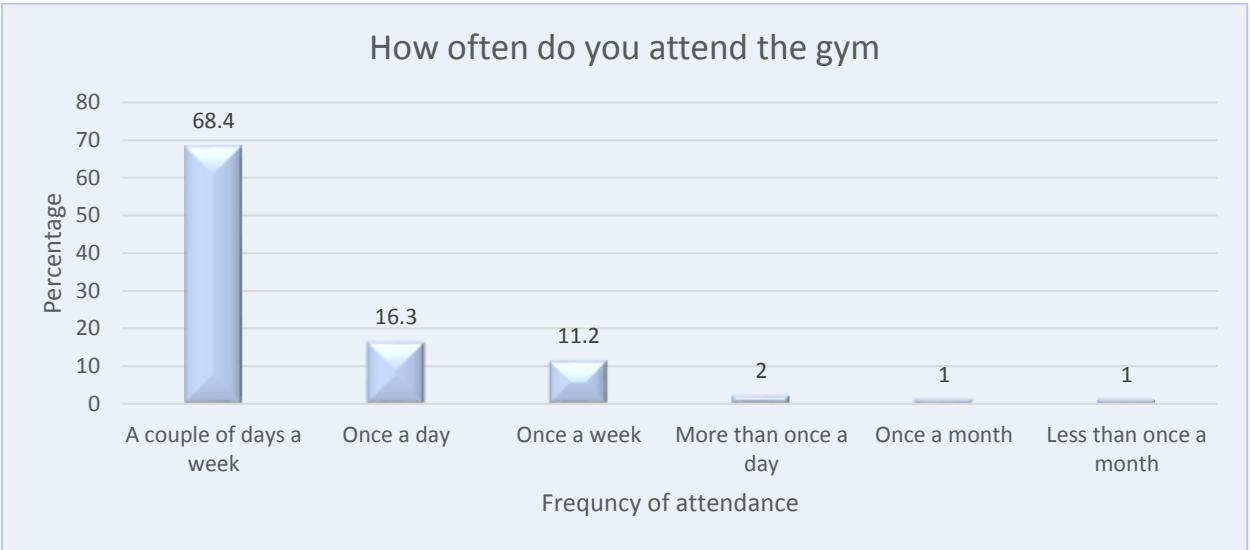


Figure 5.7: Frequency of gym attendance (n = 98).

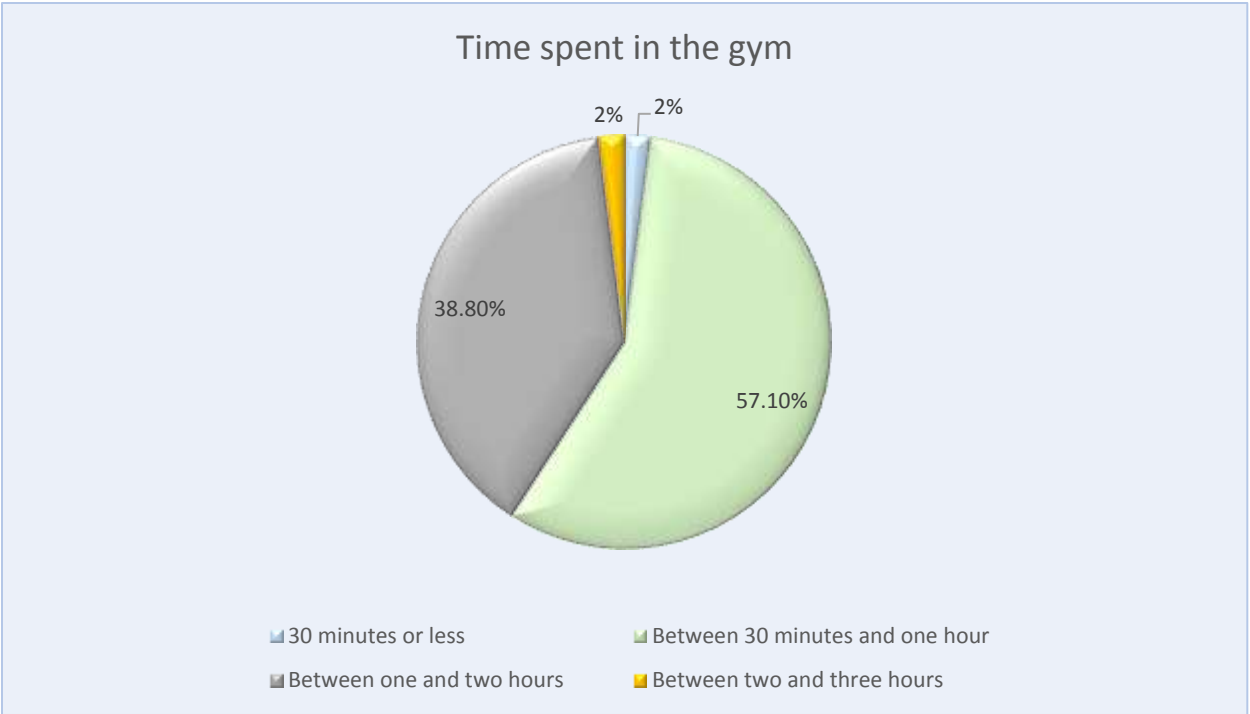
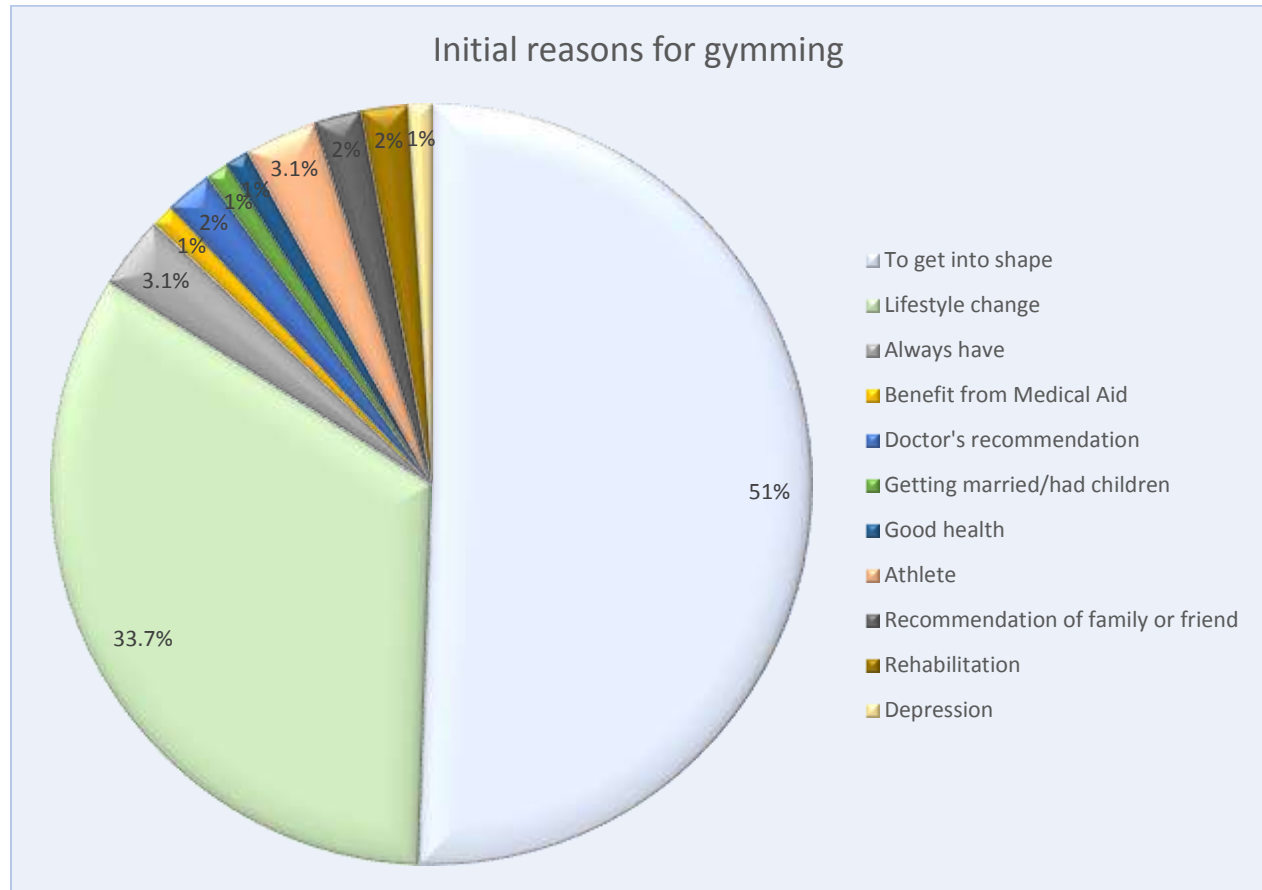


Figure 5.8: Time spent in a gym (n = 98).

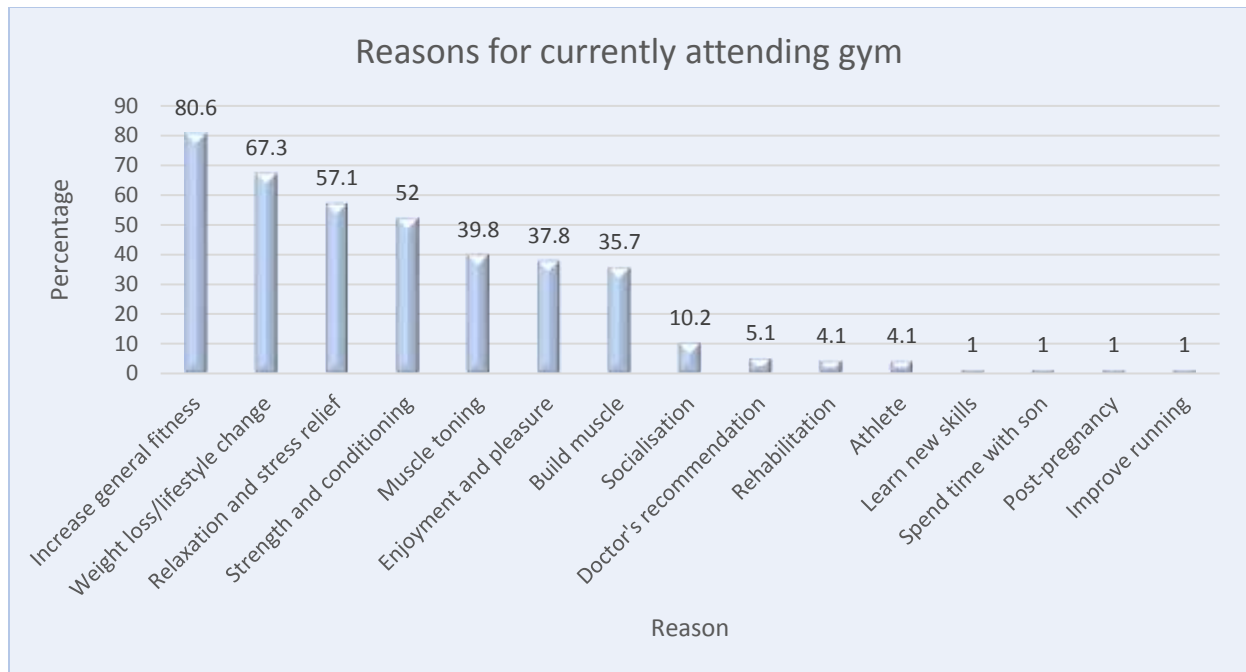
#### 5.4.3.2 Motives for joining a gym and main reasons for attending a gym

The large majority (83.7%) of the respondents joined a gym initially to get into shape (51%) or as part of a lifestyle change (32.7%). This is graphically depicted in Figure 5.9.



**Figure 5.9: Initial reasons for gymming (n = 98).**

Respondents were also asked to indicate their reasons for currently attending gym, and could select more than one response if necessary. In this study, increasing their general fitness emerged as the main reason why respondents currently gym by a large majority (80.6%), or 79, of the respondents. Weight loss or lifestyle change, as well as relaxation and stress relief, also emerged as the major reasons for currently attending gym, with 67.3% and 57.1% of the respondents respectively. These findings are supported by the findings of Athanasopoulou et al., (2011) in their study in Greece. In their study, enhance fitness state, relaxation or stress-reduction, and controlling body weight emerged as the three most popular reasons for belonging to a gym or fitness centre. Of interest is that a fairly high percentage (37.8%) of the respondents indicated that they currently went to gym for enjoyment and pleasure. These reasons, among others, are shown in Figure 5.10.



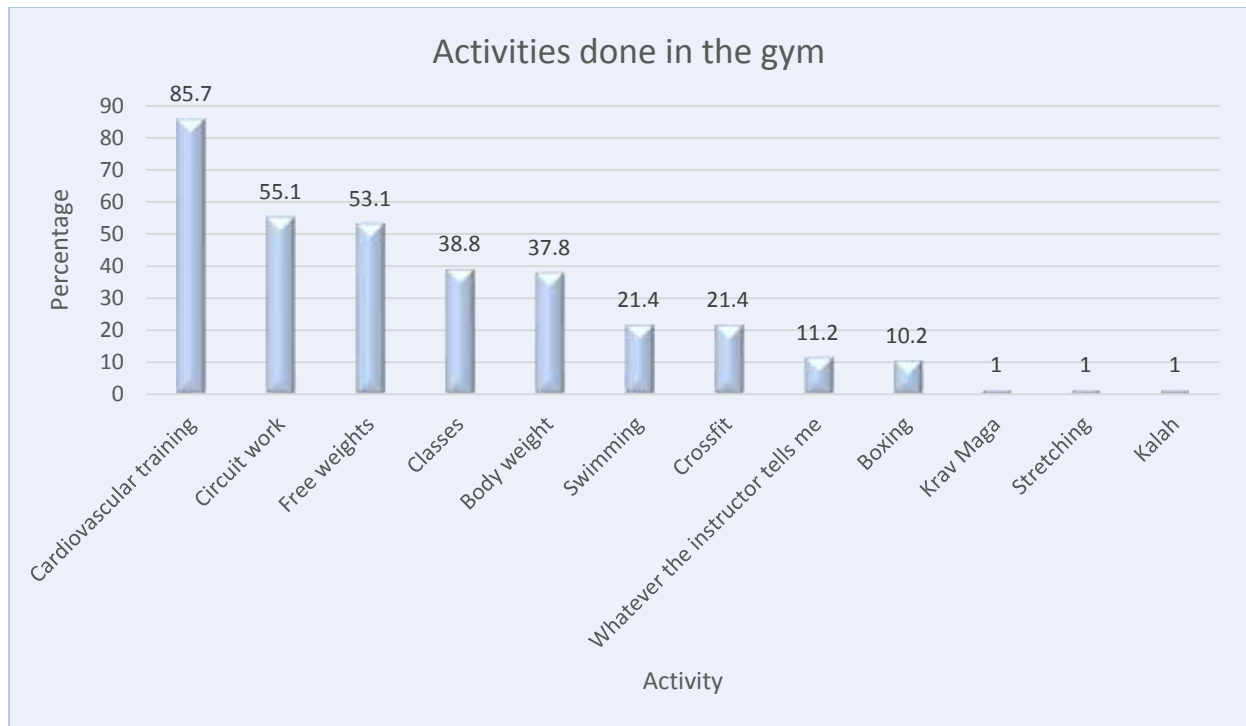
**Figure 5.10: Reasons for currently attending gym.**

#### **5.4.3.3 Usage behaviour**

In terms of the activities done in the gym, respondents could select as many of the options as they participated in. The main activity that most of the respondents do in the gym is cardiovascular training, which includes running on the treadmill, rowing, or cycling. This activity was selected 84 times by the respondents, which equates to 85.7% of the respondents. Circuit work and free weights, such as bench press or deadlifts, were also common activities with 55.1% and 53.1% of the respondents respectively. Classes (38.8%), body weight exercises (37.8%), swimming (21.4%), and cross-fit training (21.4%) were other popular activities.

A very large majority of the respondents (90.8%) participated in more than one activity at the gym, with very few (9.2%) of the respondents doing only one activity. Almost all of the respondents who indicated that they did cardiovascular training also indicated that they did circuit work, among others. Eleven percent (11.2%) of the responses received indicated that the respondents were prepared to do whatever the instructors told them. The least popular activities undertaken by the respondents were boxing (10.2%), different martial arts style training, and stretching. These activities are depicted graphically in Figure 5.11 below.





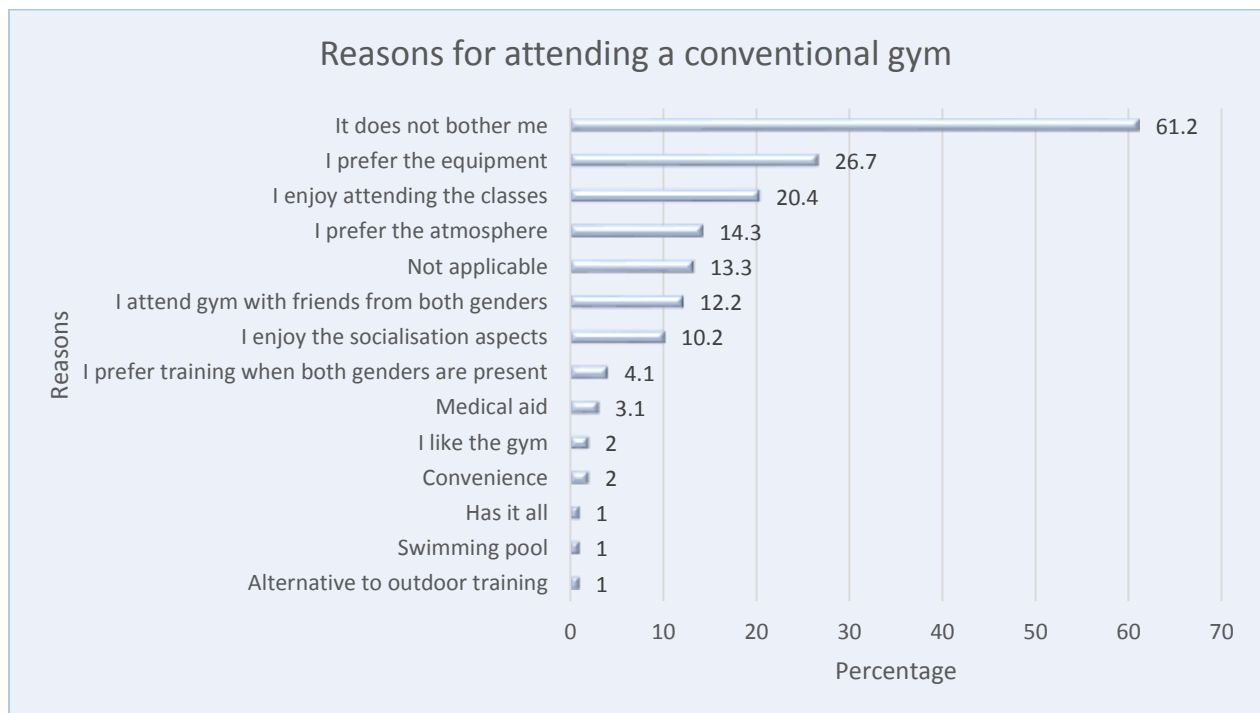
**Figure 5.11: Activities done in the gym.**

#### **5.4.3.4 Fitness centre choice criteria**

Respondents had to select what type of fitness centre they attend, for example, health club chains, female-only gyms, or specialised fitness centres, among others. Almost three quarters of the respondents (73 of the 98 respondents, or 74.5%) belonged to a conventional health club chain such as Planet Fitness, Virgin Active, and Go Health, while one respondent (1%) belonged to a female only gym in the United Kingdom. Sixteen respondents (16.3%) belonged to a gym that was privately owned. In terms of the reasons for choosing a specific gym, the respondents could select as many responses as were necessary.

Of those respondents who attend a conventional health and fitness centre (73 respondents), the majority (61.2%) indicated that it did not bother them to have people of both genders training in the same space. Furthermore, the equipment (26.7%) offered by the conventional health and fitness centres as well as the classes on offer (20.4%), were also found to be some of the main reasons why respondents belonged to these clubs. In addition, the socialisation aspects (10.2%) and overall atmosphere of the gym (14.3%) also drew the respondents to these centres. The convenience of these gyms, as well as the medical aid incentive benefits, and the fact that these

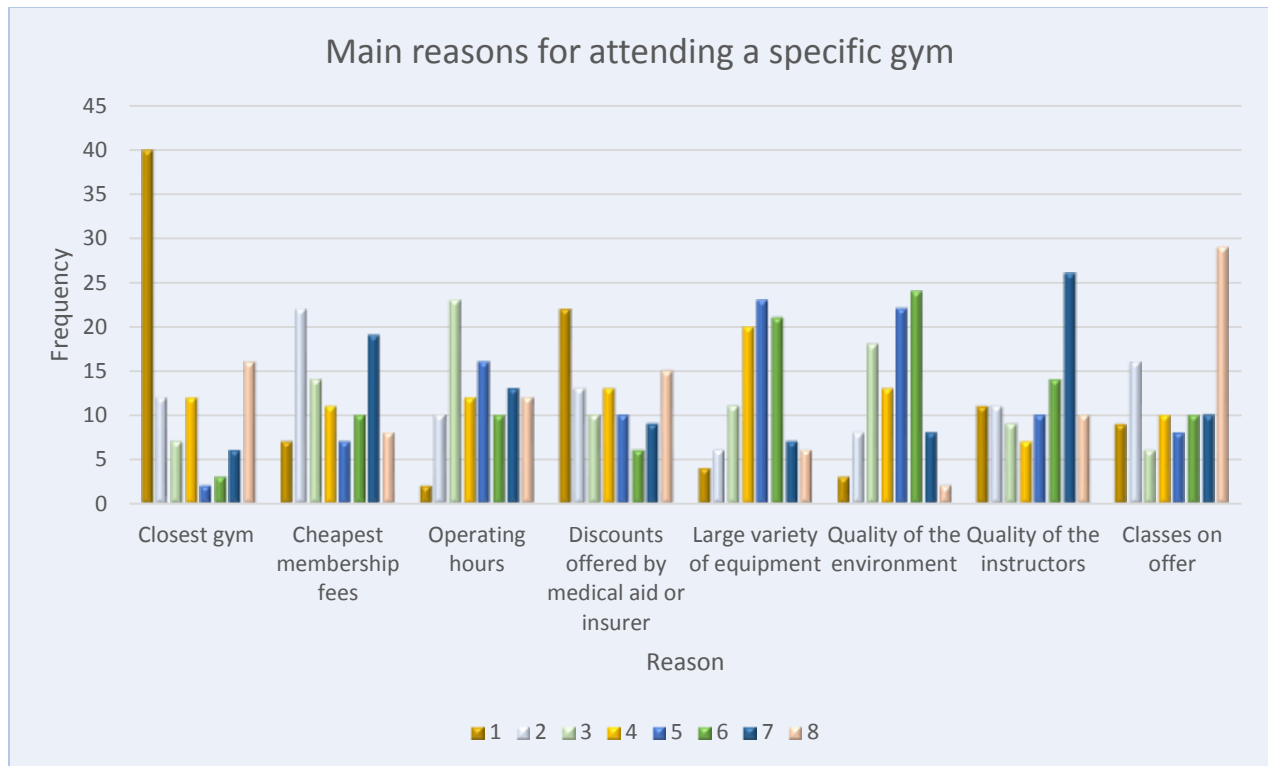
clubs offer a swimming pool, were also offered as reasons by the respondents. These reasons are depicted in Figure 5.12.



**Figure 5.12: Reasons for attending a conventional gym.**

In terms of the equipment and supplementary services on offer, 53 respondents (54.1%) felt that it was somewhat important that the gym had the latest and most modern equipment, while 17 (17.4%) respondents stated that they did not mind as long as the equipment worked. Thirty-six respondents (36.7%) felt it was somewhat important that the gym offered supplementary services such as childcare facilities, saunas, or cafeterias, while ten respondents (10.2%) felt that these services were not necessary.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the main reasons for attending their specific gym by ranking a number of reasons in order of importance from one to eight (where one is the most important reason and eight was the least important reason). The results of this question are shown in Figure 5.13.



**Figure 5.13: Reasons for attending a specific gym.**

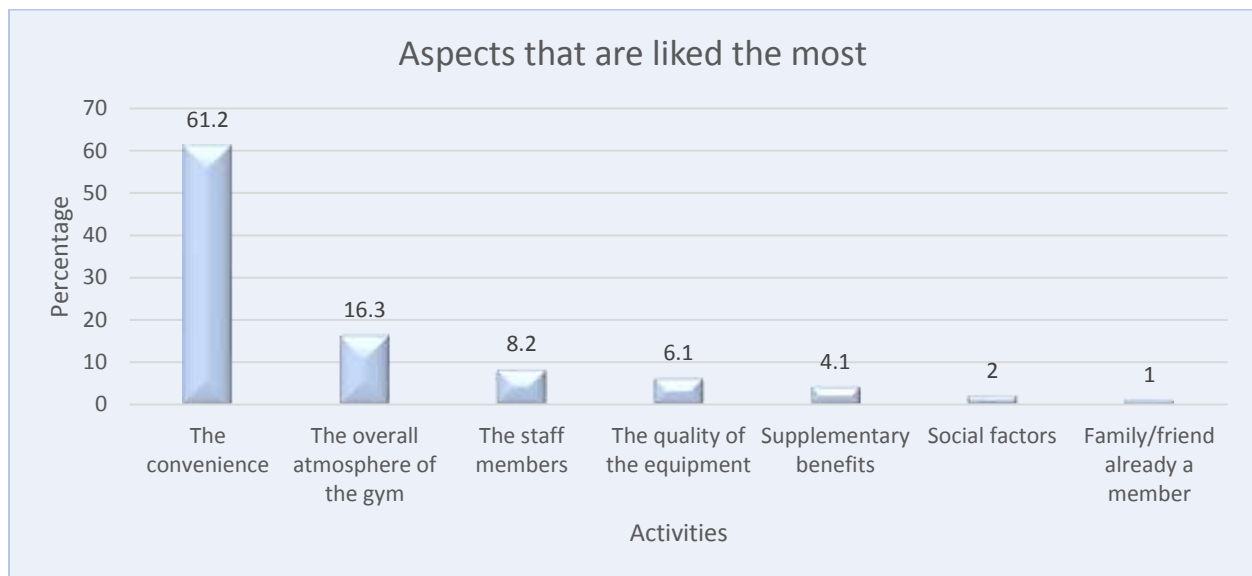
As is evident from Figure 5.13, the proximity of the gym was by far the most important reason for selecting a specific gym (40 responses). The classes that the gym offered was indicated as the least important reason by the respondents (29 responses). The price of the membership fees, operating hours, and the discounts offered by medical aids and insurers, were more important to the respondents than the quality of the environment and the instructors.

#### **5.4.3.5 Factors affecting satisfaction or dissatisfaction**

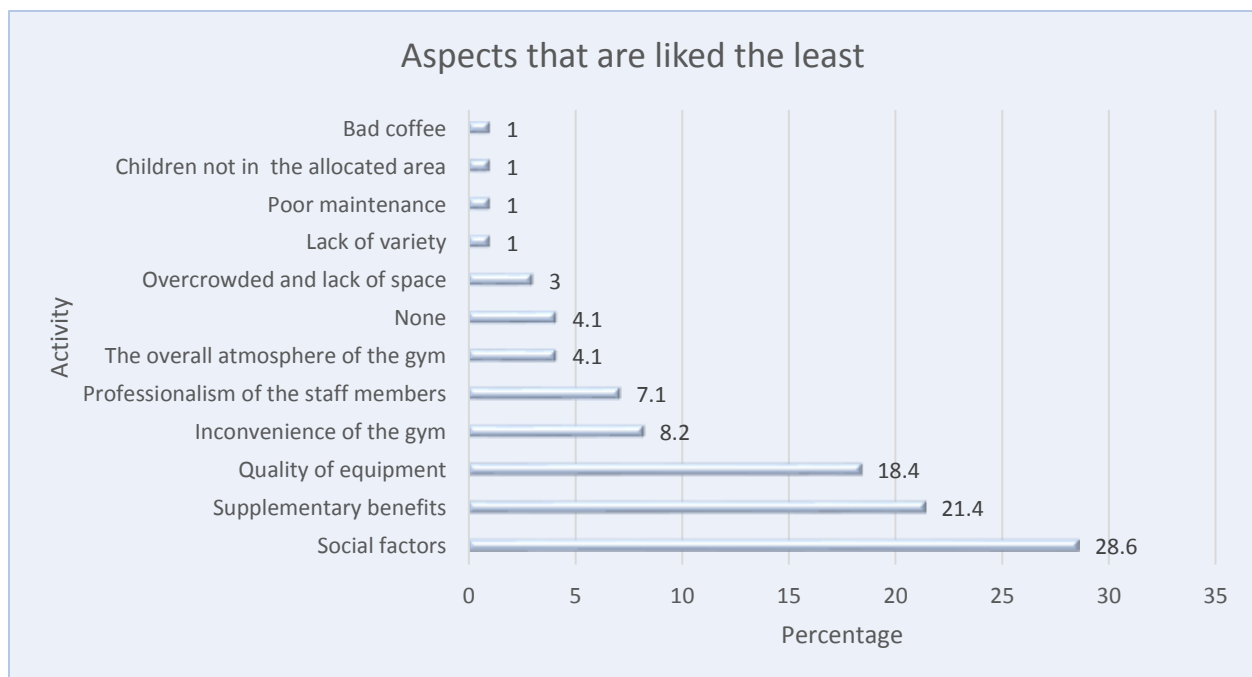
The majority (61.2%) of the respondents indicated that the convenience of the centre was the one aspect that they liked **most** about their health and fitness centre. This could be in terms of the centre's accessibility, its location, and operating hours. This was followed by the overall atmosphere of the gym (16 of the total responses or 16.3%) and the professionalism of the staff members (eight of the total responses or 8.2%).

Social factors, supplementary benefits, and the quality of the equipment (28, 21, and 18 of the total responses or 28.6%, 21.4% and 18.4% respectively) emerged as the top three things that the respondents liked the **least** about their health and fitness centre. The aspects that are liked

the most by the respondents are shown in Figure 5.14, while the factors that are liked the least by the respondents are shown in Figure 5.15.



**Figure 5.14: Factors that respondents like most about their gyms.**



**Figure 5.15: Factors that respondents like least about their gyms.**

The respondents indicated a number of activities that they would like to see offered at their respective gyms and fitness centres. Twenty-one respondents (21.4%), the modal category, would like to see their gyms offer a running or cycling track, while 19 respondents (19.4%) stated

that they would like to have more equipment on offer. Squash courts (18.4%), more relaxed classes such as Pilates or Yoga (17.3%), as well as more boot camp or cross-fit type classes (16.3%), were also in demand. Fifteen respondents (15.3%) indicated that they would like a swimming pool while a further 15 wanted martial arts and high energy classes to be offered in their gym, 14 respondents (14.3%) hoped to have sunbeds, spas, or hairstylists, and nine respondents (9.2%) would like a cafeteria. Eight respondents (8.2%) would like to have a sauna or Jacuzzi, while a further eight wanted water classes to be offered. While some of the gyms offered childcare facilities, six of the respondents (6.1%) indicated that they would like childcare facilities to be offered at their respective gyms.

#### **5.4.3.6 Behavioural intentions**

Sixty-two of the respondents (63.3%) indicated that they were very likely to renew their gym membership and encourage others to join their gym while only two respondents (2%) stated that it was not very likely that they would renew their membership. In terms of cancelling their membership, respondents could select any number of applicable reasons. Fifty-four respondents (55.1%) indicated that the main reason for cancelling their gym membership would be finances, while 29 respondents (29.6%) indicated that they would cancel their membership if the gym became too crowded.

Lack of time and things outside of the respondent's control were cited as the main reasons for not attending gym on a given day, each receiving 45 responses (45.9% each). Other main reasons included a lack of motivation (39.8%) and health reasons (33.7%).

Thirty-one of the respondents (31.6%) indicated that they gym because they enjoy it, while 28 of the respondents (28.6%) do it for the results. Twenty respondents (20.4%) gym because they believe it to be their life, and 19 respondents indicated that they gym because they have to (19.4%).

#### **5.4.3.7 Social aspects**

Fifty-seven respondents (58.2%) made friends and acquaintances while at gym. Thirty-eight respondents (38.8%) see these friends or acquaintances only at the gym, while seven respondents (7.1%) indicated that the friends that they made at the gym were classified as their best or closest friends.

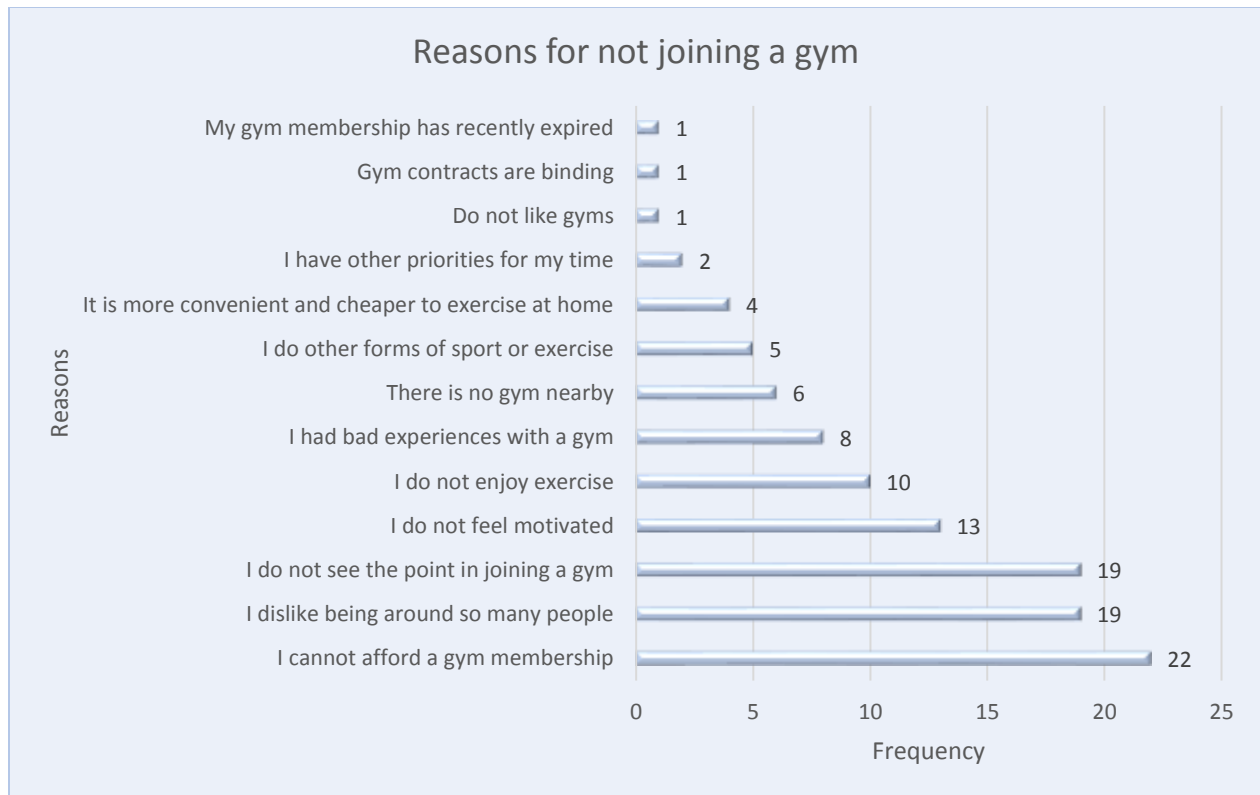
In this section, the behaviour and motivations of those respondents who attend a health and fitness centre were discussed. The final section of the questionnaire was specifically designed for those respondents who do not attend a gym or fitness centre. This information is discussed in the next section.

#### **5.4.4 Reasons for not belonging to a gym or fitness centre.**

Section D of the questionnaire was designed to determine why respondents chose not to belong to a health and fitness centre. The total number of respondents, who did not attend a gym or fitness centre, was 111. The frequency tables for this section can be found in Appendix D or made available upon request. The descriptive analyses of these questions are detailed in the sections that follow.

##### ***5.4.4.1 Reasons for not belonging to a gym or fitness centre.***

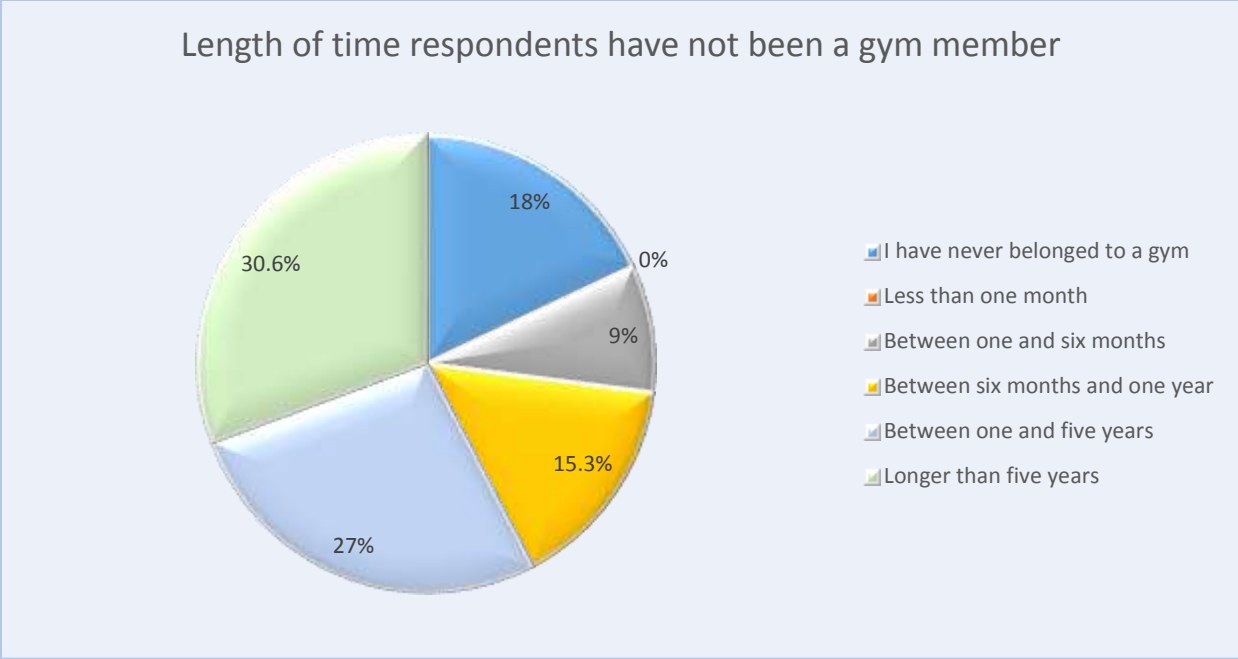
As is evident from Figure 5.16, the top three reasons are, firstly, 22 respondents (19.8%) indicated the costs associated with gym membership, secondly, 19 respondents (17.1%) indicated that they disliked being around so many people, and thirdly, 19 (17.1%) stated that they did not see the point in belonging to a gym. An interesting observation made was that eight of the respondents (7.2%) had had a bad experience with a gym, while one respondent indicated the fact that gym membership contracts are binding for a long period of time (0.9%) as further reasons for not wanting to join a gym or fitness centre. These reasons are graphically depicted in Figure 5.16.



**Figure 5.16: Reasons for not belonging to a gym (n = 111).**

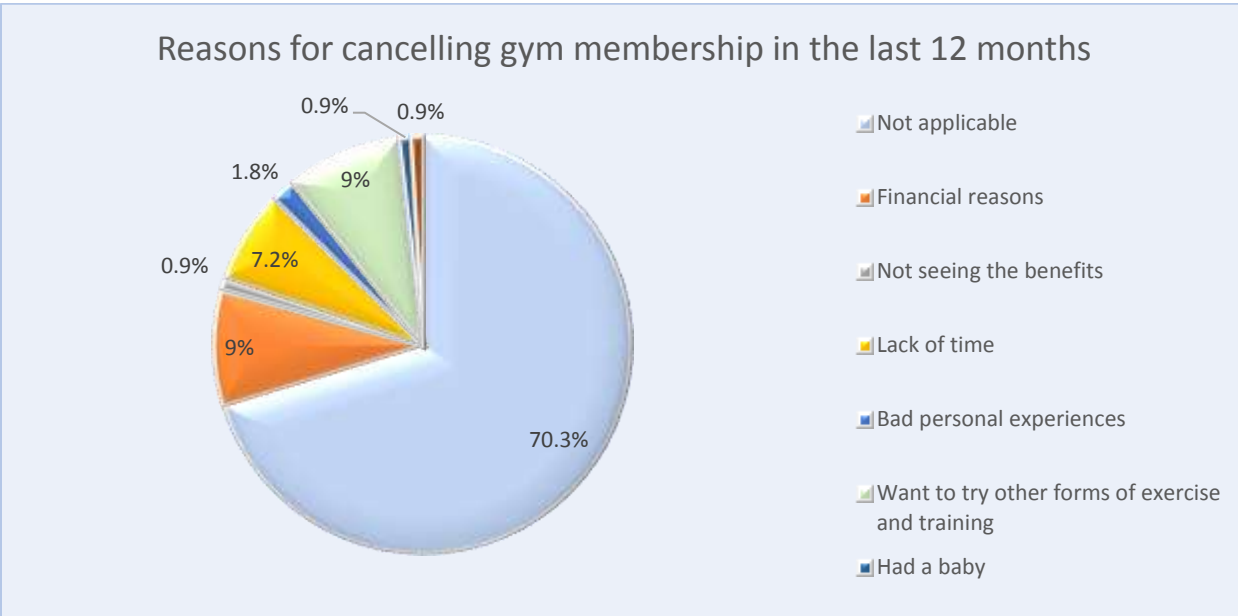
#### **5.4.4.2 *Reasons for cancelling a gym membership and length of time of non-membership***

The majority of the respondents (57.7% or 64 respondents) have not belonged to a gym or fitness centre for a period of longer than one year, while 20 respondents (18%) indicated that they have never belonged to a gym or fitness centre. Twenty-seven respondents (24.3%) had cancelled their gym membership recently (within the last year). This is depicted in Figure 5.17 below.



**Figure 5.11: Length of time since respondents last belonged to a gym (n = 111).**

Of those respondents who have cancelled a gym membership in the last 12 months, ten respondents (9%) cited financial reasons for their cancellation, while a further ten respondents (9%) wanted to try alternative forms of sport and exercise. A lack of time (7.2%) was also given as a main reason for cancelling a gym membership. These reasons are graphically presented in Figure 5.18.



**Figure 5.18: Reasons for cancelling gym membership in the last 12 months (n = 111).**



#### 5.4.4.3 Other forms of sport or exercise

Of the 111 respondents, 92 (82.9%) indicated that they partook in other forms of sport or exercise other than attending a gym or fitness centre. The respondents could select as many other forms of sport and exercise as were necessary. Seventy-two respondents (64.9%) indicated that they go for a walk, run or cycle around the block, while a further 43 respondents (38.7%) follow their own exercise routine at home. Thirteen respondents (11.7%) indicated that they partook in other sporting disciplines for example rugby, soccer, or dancing. The different forms of exercise done by the respondents are depicted in Figure 5.19.

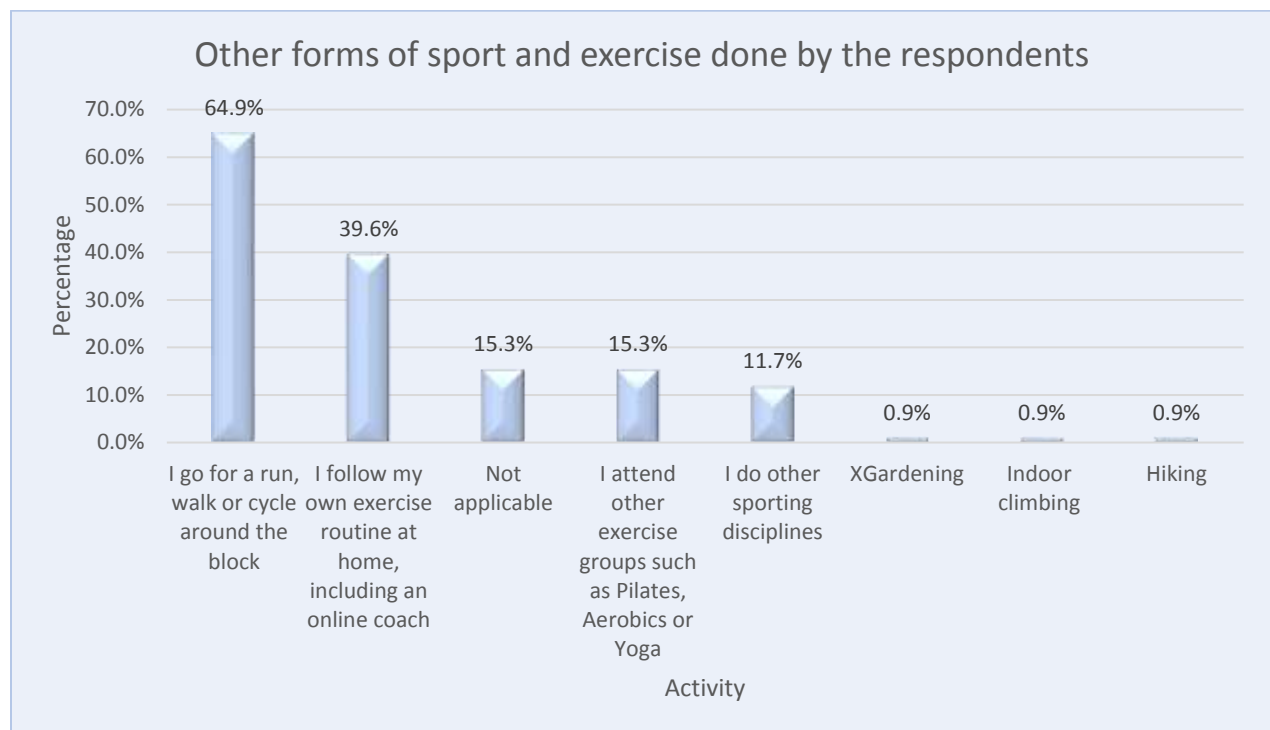


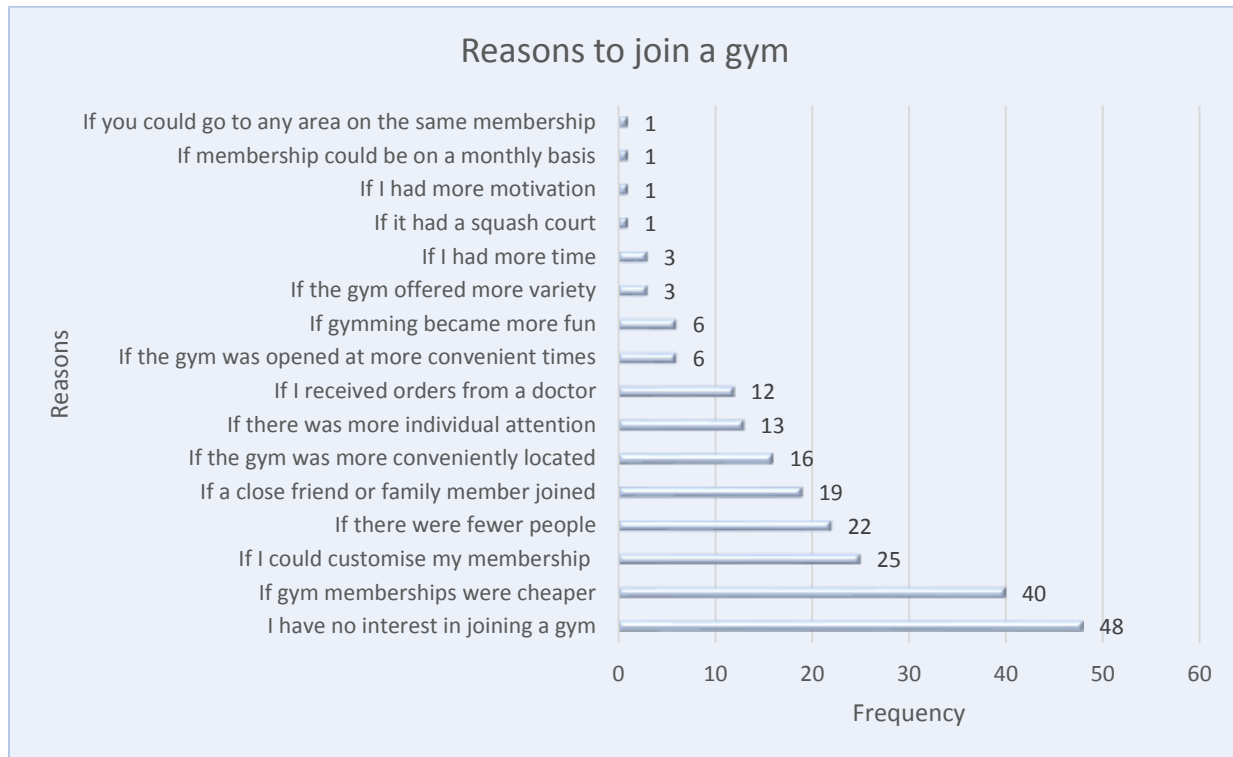
Figure 5.19: Other forms of sport and exercise done by the respondents.

The majority of the respondents indicated that they partake in these activities a couple of days a week and will spend 30 minutes to an hour on these activities (52.3% and 44.1% respectively).

#### 5.4.4.4 Motivation to become a member of a gym or fitness centre

Forty-eight respondents (43.2%) indicated that they have no intention of joining a gym or fitness centre. The top three motivators that would get the respondents to belong to a gym are, firstly, 40 respondents (36%) stated that they would join if the membership fees were cheaper, secondly, 25 respondents (22.5%) would join if they could customise their membership according to the

equipment they would use, and thirdly, 21 respondents (18.9%) indicated that they would join a gym if there were less people. Six respondents (5.4%) indicated that they would join a gym if it was open at more convenient times, such as late at night or early hours of the morning. These reasons are graphically represented in Figure 5.20.



**Figure 5.20: Reasons for non-members deciding to become members of a gym.**

In this section, the descriptive analysis of the respondents was presented. This was done in terms of their demographic profile, attitudes towards health and fitness, and the behaviour of both the gym members and non-gym members. In the next section, the inferential statistics employed in this study are discussed.

## 5.5 INFERENCE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Inferential statistical analysis refers to the use of statistical techniques to make an inference about a larger population based on the observations of the sample (Babbie, 2016). For this study, a significance level of 0.05 was selected, which means that for a statistical test to be deemed significant, the p-value had to be less than or equal to 0.05 ( $p \leq 0.05$ ).

The specific inferential statistical analyses that were conducted for this study were an exploratory factor analysis, two-step cluster analysis, cross-tabulations between the identified clusters and a number of activities, T-test analysis, and binomial logistical regression. A discussion of the results of the various analyses can be found in the sections that follow.

### **5.5.1 Exploratory factor analysis**

The aim of the exploratory factor analysis was to determine the underlying factor structure of the data and to create a more manageable number of variables for the items in Section B of the questionnaire (attitudes towards health and fitness). Each of the questions was measured using a five-point Likert type response scale, with:

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Somewhat disagree
- 3 – Neutral/ undecided
- 4 – Somewhat agree
- 5 – Strongly agree

Principle Axis Factoring was used as the extraction method (to determine the underlying factor structure of the questions), while Promax with Kaiser Normalization was employed as the rotation method. SPSS V25 was used to conduct the analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was 0.923, which is above the recommended threshold of 0.5, and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ( $p < 0.000$ ), which indicates that a factor analysis was appropriate (Pallant, 2010).

From the 23 questions asked, five factors with eigenvalues above one were identified from the data. These five factors explained 62.2% of the variance, as shown in Table 5.2. The factor loadings should be higher than 0.3 as this is the minimum level for interpretation, while loadings that are greater than 0.5 are deemed to be significant, and loadings greater than 0.7 are considered ideal (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2014 (hereinafter Hair et al., 2014); Esterhuizen & Martins, 2016). A cut-off value of 0.3 was, therefore, used for the factor loadings. Some of the variables loaded onto more than one factor. In this case, the variable was included in the factor for which it loaded higher or made the most theoretical sense. The five factors were subsequently labelled as Enjoyment, Health Enhancement, Health Necessity, Lifestyle, and Social.

The reliability of each of the five factors was tested by means of Cronbach's Alpha. Cronbach's Alpha provides an estimate of the internal consistency (reliability) of a scale, where the closer the value is to 1, the higher the reliability (Johnson, 2018). A Cronbach Alpha value of between 0.6 and 0.8 is recommended (Goforth, 2015), while 0.7 is deemed to be the acknowledged lower threshold for published instruments (Hair et al., 2014; Taber, 2017) and 0.6 the acknowledged threshold for exploratory research. However, it is important to note that this threshold value is merely a rule of thumb and, according to Taber (2017:6), is deemed to be an "arbitrary threshold for an accepted value". The results of the factor analysis are summarised in Table 5.2 below and discussed in the sections that follow.

**Table 5.2: Summary of the factor analysis for the five constructs.**

Construct and item description		Percentage of variance	Factor Loadings					Cronbach Alpha
<b>Enjoyment</b>		<b>38.9%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>.844</b>
<b>Q7</b>	I exercise only because I have to.		-.864					
<b>Q8</b>	Exercise is fun.		.579					
<b>Q15</b>	Exercise is boring for me.		-.844					
<b>Q20</b>	I often find excuses for not exercising.		-.584					
<b>Health Enhancement</b>		<b>7.4%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>.883</b>
<b>Q1</b>	I feel it is important to remain fit and healthy.			.365				
<b>Q2</b>	I feel good after a workout session.			.718				
<b>Q4</b>	The sweat and pain after an exercise session is worth it.			.648				
<b>Q5</b>	Working out tends to lower my stress levels.			.801				

<b>Q6</b>	Exercising has boosted my self-confidence levels.			.766				
<b>Q11</b>	Exercise is a way of life.			.372				
<b>Health Necessity</b>		<b>6%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>.671</b>
<b>Q12</b>	I perceive exercise to be unavoidable.				.438			
<b>Q13</b>	I am concerned with my overall health and well-being and, therefore, I exercise.				.725			
<b>Q23</b>	I exercise because it is good for me.				.764			
<b>Lifestyle</b>		<b>5.4%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>.782</b>
<b>Q3</b>	I follow a healthy diet.					.462		
<b>Q9</b>	I like to wear sports clothing.					.396		
<b>Q10</b>	I tend to keep up with the latest fitness trends.					.663		
<b>Q14</b>	In my free time, I can be found in the gym or doing other forms of exercise.					.484		
<b>Q16</b>	Even when working out, it is important for me to look good.					.437		
<b>Q17</b>	I find watching other people work out to be entertaining.					.458		
<b>Q21</b>	I follow an athlete's way of life, in that I follow a specific eating and training plan.					.664		
<b>Social</b>		<b>4.4%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>.556</b>
<b>Q18</b>	Exercise is more fun with friends.						.661	

<b>Q19</b>	I enjoy partaking in a number of different sporting codes.						.328	
<b>Q22</b>	Exercise is a social activity.						.508	

Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.

#### **5.5.1.1 *Enjoyment***

The first identified factor was labelled as Enjoyment by the researcher and was measured through questions 7, 8 15, and 20 of the questionnaire. This factor had a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.844. This is above the acknowledged threshold of 0.7, which indicates the adequate reliability of the factor. Four items loaded onto this factor, namely questions 7, 8, 15, and 20, and represented 38.9% of the total variance.

In the Enjoyment factor, three of the variables showed a negative factor loading. This implied that the inverse of the given statement loaded onto this factor. For example, the variable "I exercise only because I have to" had a value of -0.864, which implies that the inverse statement is associated with the factor namely, "I do not exercise only because I have to". These items were all reversed scored in calculating the Enjoyment variable.

#### **5.5.1.2 *Health Enhancement***

The second distinct factor was labelled by the researcher as Health Enhancement due to the nature of the items that loaded onto this factor. This factor comprised six loadings, and was measured through questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 11 of the questionnaire. This factor showed a high level of reliability with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.883. This is above the acknowledged threshold of 0.7, which indicates the adequate reliability of the factor. This factor had the highest reliability value of the five factors. Health Enhancement represented 7.4% of the total variance.

#### **5.5.1.3 *Health Necessity***

Health Necessity was the label provided by the researcher for the third factor. Three items loaded onto this factor, namely questions 12, 13 and 23, and it represented 6% of the total variance. This factor showed an acceptable level of reliability with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.671, which is acceptable for exploratory research.

#### **5.5.1.4 Lifestyle**

The fourth factor was labelled as Lifestyle by the researcher and had the highest number of loadings of all the factors. Seven items loaded in this factor, which represented 5.4% of the total variance. As shown in Table 5.5, this factor comprised questions 3, 9, 10, 14, 16, 17, and 21. The Cronbach Alpha value for this factor was 0.782. This is above the acknowledged threshold of 0.7, which indicates the adequate reliability of the factor.

#### **5.5.1.5 Social**

The final factor, which represented 4.4% of the total variance, was labelled as Social by the researcher. The Social factor had the lowest level of reliability with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.556. While this is below the acknowledged threshold of 0.6, it is still acceptable. George and Mallery (2003) and Taber (2017) indicated that a Cronbach Alpha value of above 0.5 is still acceptable, while anything less than 0.5 is not acceptable. Three questions loaded onto this variable, namely, questions 18, 19, and 22.

After conducting the exploratory factor analysis, a descriptive statistical analysis was conducted on each of the factors to identify the characteristics of each factor. This is discussed in the following section.

#### **5.5.1.6 Descriptive statistics of the five identified factors**

The mean, median, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis of each of the five identified factors are listed in Table 5.3 below and discussed in the sections that follow.

**Table 5.3: Descriptive statistical analysis of the five identified factors (n=209).**

	Enjoyment	Health Enhancement	Health Necessity	Lifestyle	Social
Mean	3.4	4.2	3.8	2.7	3.2
Median	3.8	4.3	3.7	2.7	3.3
Standard Deviation	1.027	0.746	0.772	0.777	0.857
Skewness	- 0.474	- 1.061	- 0.483	0.332	- 0.140
Kurtosis	- 0.670	0.822	0.021	- 0.398	- 0.227

Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.

The analysis shows that there was a high level of agreement among the respondents on the Health Enhancement factor, with a mean value of 4.2. The Lifestyle factor had a mean value of 2.7. When looking at the frequency table for the items associated with the factor, it is clear that the majority of the respondents disagreed with five of the questions that loaded onto this factor and were neutral on two of the questions.

The skewness value specifies the symmetry of the distribution, while the kurtosis value indicates the “peakedness” of the distribution (Pallant, 2010). The skewness and kurtosis values of the five factors indicate that we can assume that the data has a normal distribution as all of the values are between -2 and 2.

The descriptive statistics were then cross-tabulated with gym membership to provide a comparison between gym members and non-gym members in terms of the five factors, as shown in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4: Descriptive statistical analysis of the five identified factors cross-tabulated with gym membership.**

<b>Are you a current member of a gym?</b>		<b>Enjoyment</b>	<b>Health Enhancement</b>	<b>Health Necessity</b>	<b>Lifestyle</b>	<b>Social</b>
<b>No (N=111)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	3.0	3.9	3.5	2.3	3.1
	<b>Median</b>	3.0	4.0	3.7	2.3	3.0
	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	0.981	0.811	0.832	0.647	0.853
	<b>Skewness</b>	- 0.156	- 0.631	- 0.201	0.798	0.019
	<b>Kurtosis</b>	- 0.771	- 0.067	- 0.254	0.849	- 0.442
<b>Yes (N=98)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	3.9	4.5	4.0	3.2	3.4
	<b>Median</b>	4.0	4.7	4.0	3.1	3.3
	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	0.873	0.455	0.605	0.673	0.838
	<b>Skewness</b>	- 1.027	- 0.970	- 0.430	0.087	- 0.328
	<b>Kurtosis</b>	0.600	- 0.009	0.004	- 0.078	0.323

Source: Researcher’s own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.



As is evident in Table 5.4, the mean values for the gym membership group are higher than the group that does not attend a gym. As with Table 5.3, Health Enhancement had the highest mean (4.5 for those that attend gym and 3.9 for those who do not attend gym) of the factors. This indicates that the respondents from both groups agreed with the questions that loaded on that factor. Lifestyle had the lowest mean scores for both groups (3.2 for those that attend gym and 2.3 for those who do not attend gym). The non-gym members seemed to disagree more with the questions associated with this factor, while the gym members were more neutral or undecided on these questions. The skewness and kurtosis values indicate that we can assume that the data from both groups falls within a normal distribution as all the values are between -2 and 2.

#### **5.5.1.7 Correlation of the five identified factors**

Correlation analysis describes the direction and strength of the relationships between variables (Pallant, 2010). A Pearson's correlation coefficient was computed to determine the relationship between whether a person attends a gym or not and the five factors of Enjoyment, Health Enhancement, Health Necessity, Lifestyle, and Social. This can be seen in Table 5.5

Table 5.5: Pearson correlation coefficient values for the five factors and gym membership.

Are you a member of a gym?			Enjoyment	Health Enhancement	Health Necessity	Lifestyle	Social
No (N=111)	Enjoyment	Pearson Correlation	1	.651*	.517*	.531*	.297*
		Significance (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.002
	Health Enhancement	Pearson Correlation		1	.635*	.523*	.336*
		Significance (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.000
	Health Necessity	Pearson Correlation			1	.454*	.189**
		Significance (2-tailed)				.000	.047
	Lifestyle	Pearson Correlation				1	.349*
		Significance (2-tailed)					.000
	Social	Pearson Correlation					1
		Significance (2-tailed)					
Yes (N=98)	Enjoyment	Pearson Correlation	1	.710*	.352*	.411*	.177
		Significance (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.082
	Health Enhancement	Pearson Correlation		1	.451*	.581*	.223**
		Significance (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.027
	Health Necessity	Pearson Correlation			1	.391*	.226**
		Significance (2-tailed)				.000	.025
	Lifestyle	Pearson Correlation				1	.355*
		Significance (2-tailed)					.000
	Social	Pearson Correlation					1
		Significance (2-tailed)					

Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.

\*Red = Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*\*Green = Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In terms of non-gym members, all of the correlation coefficients were statistically significant at the 0.01 level with the exception of the correlation between the Health Necessity and Social factors, which was significant at the 0.05 level. The strongest correlation in this group was Health Enhancement and Enjoyment (0.651), followed by Health Enhancement and Health Necessity (0.635). The weakest correlation at the 0.01 level in the non-gym member group was between the Enjoyment and Social factors, which had a correlation value of 0.297.

In terms of the gym member group, the correlations between Health Enhancement and Social, and Health Necessity and Social were significant at the 0.05 level, while the rest were significant at the 0.01 level. The strongest correlation in this group, by quite a large margin, was between Enjoyment and Health Enhancement (0.710), while the weakest correlation was between Enjoyment and Social (0.177). In both groups, the Social factor showed the weakest correlation with the other factors.

This section provided a discussion on the exploratory factor analysis, descriptive statistics of the factors, and the factor correlation analysis of this study. The exploratory factor analysis is used to help identify the influencing factors that will affect an individual's decision to become a member of a health and fitness centre (Secondary Objective One). In the next section, the gym and non-gym members' profiles are discussed. These profiles will be used to answer the primary research objective, namely, the development of a consumer typology of members of a health and fitness centre.

### **5.5.2 Profiling gym and non-gym members**

Two-step cluster analyses were utilised to investigate exploratively whether a “gym” respondent profile and a “non-gym” respondent profile could be identified by exploring each group separately. Various cluster analyses were conducted to derive the best possible clustering solution. The following variables are included in the cluster solution and considered to be optimal in terms of cluster quality and variable values (mean value for continuous variables and majority category percentage and distribution for categorical variables):

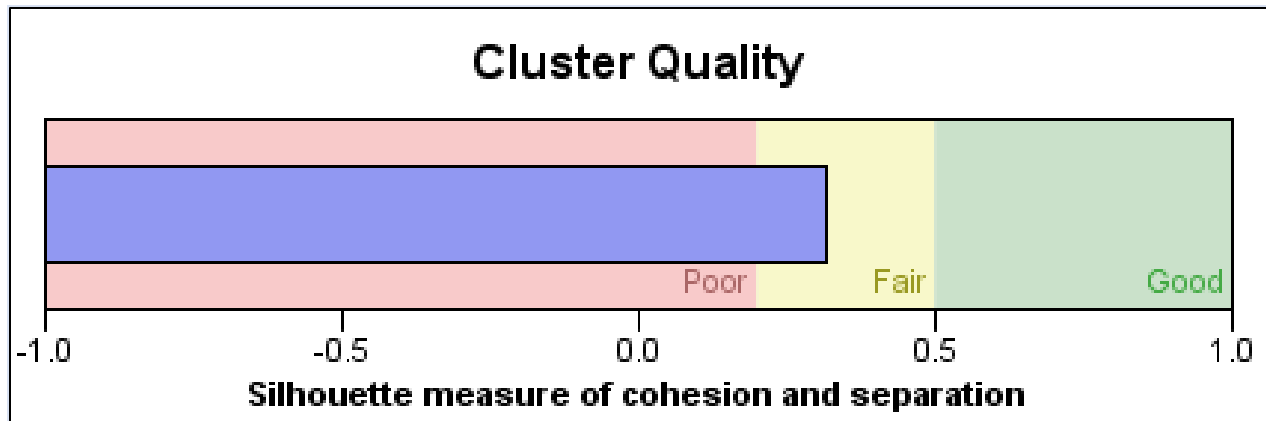
- For both the gym and non-gym group:
  - The five factors identified in the exploratory factor analysis (Health Enhancement, Health Necessity, Lifestyle, Enjoyment, and Social)
  - Demographic variables (age, highest level of education, and marital status)

- For the gym group:
  - How often do you attend a gym or fitness centre?
  - How much time do you tend to spend in the gym during any given session?
  - How likely are you to renew your membership and encourage others to join your gym or fitness centre?
- For the non-gym group:
  - What are the main reasons for not belonging to a gym or fitness centre?
  - For how long have you not been a gym member?
  - Do you do other forms of sport or exercise?
  - How often do you engage in these activities?
  - How much time will you generally spend on these activities?

The analysis indicated the identification of two clusters for the group of respondents who attend a gym, and two clusters for the group of respondents who do not attend a gym. The clusters pertaining to the gym members will be discussed first, followed by a discussion on the clusters of the non-gym member group. The order in which the variables appear in the cluster indicate their importance in the formation of the clusters. The mean values were presented for each of the five factors identified in the factor analysis, while a percentage value was provided for the remaining elements identified in the cluster analysis, which indicated the majority percentage of respondents and the associated category.

#### **5.5.2.1 Cluster analysis of those respondents who attend a gym or fitness centre**

The two identified clusters for the gym members ( $n = 98$ ), based on variables considered as the inputs for the clusters, are shown in Table 5.6. In terms of the cluster distribution, cluster one comprised 66 respondents (67.3%), while cluster two comprised 32 respondents (32.7%). The measure of quality of cohesion for these clusters was fair (0.3), as shown in Figure 5.21.



**Figure 5.21: Measure of the quality of cohesion of the gym member clusters.**

For ease of reference, cluster one was labelled by the researcher as the Tricenarians (or Thirty-somethings), while cluster two was labelled by the researcher as the Vicenarians (or Twenty-somethings). The reason for this was that age was the easiest distinguishable variable between these two clusters.

**Table 5.6: Identified clusters for gym members.**

	<b>Cluster 1 (Tricenarians or Thirty-somethings)</b>	<b>Cluster 2 (Vicenarians or Twenty-somethings)</b>
<b>Size</b>	<b>67.3% (N = 66)</b>	<b>32.7% (N = 32)</b>
<b>Health Enhancement</b>	4.77 (average)	4.09 (average)
<b>Enjoyment</b>	4.2 (average)	3.14 (average)
<b>Lifestyle</b>	3.43 (average)	2.64 (average)
<b>Health Necessity</b>	4.24 (average)	3.58 (average)
<b>How likely are you to renew your membership and encourage others to join your gym?</b>	Very likely (80%)	Somewhat likely (47%)
<b>How often do you attend a gym or fitness centre?</b>	A couple of days a week (71%)	A couple of days a week (62.5%)
<b>What is your age?</b>	Between 30 and 39 years old (39.4%)	Between 20 and 29 years old (62.5%)

<b>What is your highest level of education?</b>	Honours Degree (37.9%)	Bachelor's Degree (37.5%)
<b>What is your marital status?</b>	Married (59.1%)	Single (46.9%)
<b>How much time do you tend to spend in the gym during any given session?</b>	30 minutes to one hour (54.5%)	30 minutes to one hour (62.5%)
<b>Social</b>	3.45 (average)	3.2 (average)

**Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.**

Cluster one comprised of, in majority, the older (between 30 and 39 years of age), married individuals, with a post-graduate qualification (Honours degree), hence the name Tricenarians, whereas cluster two were the younger (between the ages of 20 and 29 years), single individuals with a Bachelor's Degree, hence they were named the Vicenarians.

The most important differentiating factor between the two clusters was Health Enhancement (mean values of 4.77 and 4.09 for the Tricenarians and Vicenarians respectively) followed by Enjoyment (mean values of 4.2 and 3.14 for the Tricenarians and Vicenarians respectively). The Social factor was the least important differentiator between the two clusters, with the Vicenarians being less influenced by the social aspects of gym than the Tricenarians (mean values of 3.2 and 3.45 respectively).

Overall, the Tricenarians had higher mean values for the different motivating factors (Health Enhancement, Enjoyment, Lifestyle, Health Necessity, and Social) than the Vicenarians. Furthermore, the Tricenarians were more loyal to their respective gyms and fitness centres than the Vicenarians, in that the majority were very likely to renew their gym membership (80%), whereas the majority in the Vicenarian cluster were only somewhat likely (47%) to renew their gym membership. The majority of both groups attended gym a couple of days a week. However, the second highest percentage of respondents for the Tricenarians was once a day, while it was once a week for the Vicenarians. Both groups, on average, spent between 30 minutes and one hour in the gym.

### 5.5.2.2 Cluster analysis of those respondents who do not attend a gym or fitness centre

The two identified clusters for the non-gym members ( $n = 111$ ), based on variables considered as the inputs for the clusters, are shown in Table 5.7. In terms of cluster distribution, cluster one comprised 18 respondents (16.2%), while cluster two comprised 93 respondents (83.8%). The measure of quality of cohesion for these clusters was fair (0.3), as shown in Figure 5.22.

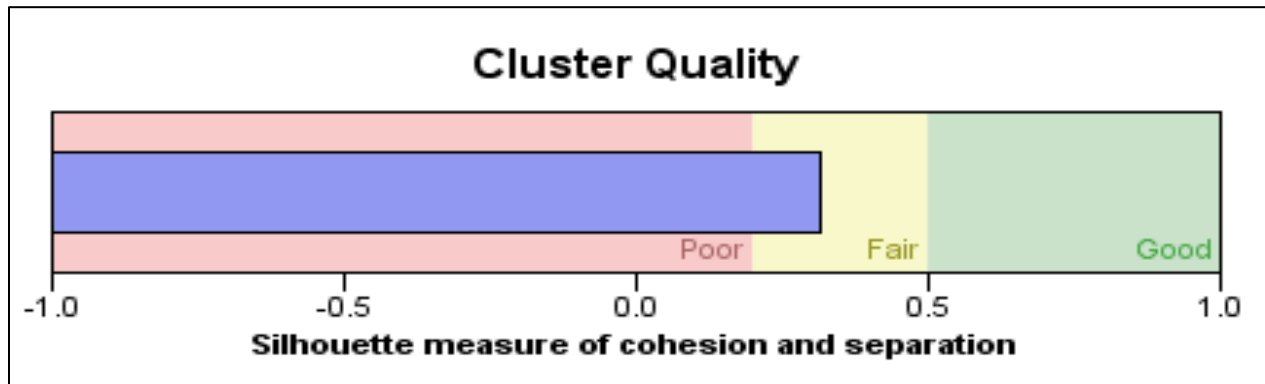


Figure 5.22: Measure of the quality of cohesion of the non-gym member clusters.

While these clusters comprised only of those individuals who were not members of a gym or fitness centre, for ease of reference, the clusters were labelled by the researcher as Non-Active and Somewhat Active. The Non-Active group did no other forms of sport or exercise; while the Somewhat Active group indicated that they did other forms of sport or exercise. This was the easiest distinguishable variable between these two clusters.

Table 5.7: Identified clusters for respondents who do not attend a gym.

	Cluster 1 (Non-Active)	Cluster 2 (Somewhat Active)
Size	16.2% (N = 18)	83.8% (N = 93)
Do you do any other form of sport or exercise?	No (100%)	Yes (98.9%)
How much time will you generally spend on these activities?	Not applicable (83.3%)	Between 30 minutes and one hour (51.6%)
How often do you engage in these activities?	Not applicable (83.3%)	A couple of days a week. (62.4%)

<b>Social</b>	2.48 (average)	3.20 (average)
<b>Health Enhancement</b>	3.31 (average)	3.99 (average)
<b>Enjoyment</b>	2.38 (average)	3.15 (average)
<b>Health Necessity</b>	3.00 (average)	3.65 (average)
<b>What is your marital status?</b>	Married (44.4%)	Married (63.4%)
<b>Lifestyle</b>	2.25 (average)	2.36 (average)
<b>What is your main reason for not belonging to a gym or fitness centre?</b>	I can't afford a gym membership (33.3%)	I dislike being around so many people (19.4%)
<b>What is your age?</b>	Between 20 and 29 years old (33.3%)	Between 20 and 29 years old (35.5%)
<b>For how long have you not been a gym member?</b>	Longer than five years (33.3%)	Longer than five years (30.1%)
<b>What is your highest level of education?</b>	Grade 12 (Matric) (22.2%)	Bachelor's Degree (29%)

**Source:** Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.

In terms of the non-gym members, the Somewhat Actives (cluster 2) comprised mainly (98.8%) those individuals who did other forms of exercise, while the Non-Actives (cluster 1) were those individuals (100%) who did not do any other forms of sport or exercise, hence the descriptive name given to each of the clusters.

While the Social factor was the least important differentiator for the gym members' clusters, it was the most important of the five motivating factors for those respondents who did not attend a gym or fitness centre (mean values of 2.48 and 3.2 for the Non-Actives and the Somewhat Actives respectively). The Somewhat Active cluster had higher mean values for the five factors (Social, Health Enhancement, Enjoyment, Health Necessity, and Lifestyle) than the Non-Active cluster. In both clusters, the majority age category of respondents was between the ages of 20 and 29 years old (33.5% and 35.5% for the Non-Actives and the Somewhat Actives respectively), married (however, a greater majority of the Somewhat Active cluster were married as opposed to the Non-Active cluster), and had not belonged to a gym for more than five years. With regard to the Somewhat Active group, the majority category was a Bachelor's Degree, while in the Non-Active



cluster it was a Grade 12 qualification. The Non-Actives' main reason (majority category) for not belonging to a gym was that they could not afford the membership fees, while the Somewhat Active group disliked being around so many people (33.3% and 19.4% respectively).

The two clusters for the gym members and the non-gym members were used to develop a profile of the respondents, which will assist in developing a consumer typology. In the next section, the consumer behaviour of these four profiles will be explored.

### **5.5.3 Consumer behaviour of the gym and non-gym member profiles**

Various cross-tabulations were computed to determine the relationship between consumer behaviour and the type of respondent (the different gym and non-gym groups identified through the cluster analysis). The cross-tabulations were compiled from the questions asked in Section C (Gym or fitness centre experience) and Section D (Reasons for not belonging to a gym or fitness centre) of the questionnaire. The key questions, which formed part of the cross-tabulations for each group, are highlighted in Table 5.8. These questions were selected, as they were the most beneficial in determining the relationship between behaviour and the different profile groups. As the focus of this study is to develop a consumer typology of members of a gym or fitness centre, the gym member profiles were explored in greater depth than the non-gym member profiles.

**Table 5.8: Key questions asked in developing the cross-tabulations.**

Gym-member profiles	Non-gym member profiles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What activities do you do in the gym?</li> <li>• Why did you start gymming?</li> <li>• What type of gym or fitness centre do you attend?</li> <li>• If you attend a female only gym, such as Curves, please indicate your reasons why.</li> <li>• If you attend a gym, such as Virgin Active or Planet Fitness, which has both male and female members, please indicate your reasons why.</li> <li>• How long have you been a member of your gym or fitness centre?</li> <li>• What aspect of your gym or fitness centre do you like the most?</li> <li>• What aspect of your gym or fitness centre do you like the least?</li> <li>• What are your main reasons for gymming currently?</li> <li>• Have you made new friends/acquaintances while at the gym?</li> <li>• How would you classify your relationship with the friends you made at the gym?</li> <li>• Which one of the following statements best describes your current attitude towards gymming?</li> <li>• How important is it for you that the gym has the latest, modern equipment?</li> <li>• How important is it for you that your gym offers supplementary services, such as a sauna, childcare facilities, or a cafeteria?</li> <li>• What are the main reasons for not attending gym on a given day?</li> <li>• Which activities, which are not currently offered at your gym, would you like to see being offered at your gym?</li> <li>• If you were to cancel your gym membership, what would be the main reason/s for this decision?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What other forms of exercise do you do?</li> <li>• What reasons, if any, would get you to become a member of a gym?</li> </ul>

**Source:** Researcher's own composition.

### **5.5.3.1 Cross-tabulations for gym member clusters**

Various cross-tabulations were computed to determine the relationship between consumer behaviour (the questions identified in Table 5.8) and the two identified gym-member clusters (identified in Section 5.4.2.1). These cross-tabulations were used to assist in identifying the differences in behaviour between the two clusters. The statistically significant findings of these cross-tabulations can be seen in Table 5.9 and Table 5.10, while all the cross-tabulations computed for this section can be made available upon request.

Each combination was tested, using Pearson's chi square test for independence, for a statistically significant association through cross-tabulation of the cluster membership with each option of the

question investigated. The items are deemed to be statistically significant if the asymptotic significance value was less than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) mention that a probability of 0.05 or less means that there is a 95% certainty that the relationship between the variables could not have occurred by chance alone. Only those combinations, which showed a statistically significant association ( $p < 0.05$ ), were included in Table 5.9 and Table 5.10, and in the discussion that follows.

**Table 5.9: Statistically significant findings of the cross-tabulations with the gym member clusters.**

Question	Specific activities/ responses	Cluster 1 (Tricenarians)		Cluster 2 (Vicenarians)		Pearson Chi Square Exact Significance (2 sided)
		No	Yes	No	Yes	
Which activities are done by the respondents in the gym?	Boxing	84.8%	15.2%	100%	0%	.028
What are the respondents' main reasons for gymming currently?	Enjoyment and pleasure	53%	47%	81.3%	18.8%	.008
Respondents' reasons for attending a gym with male and female members.	It does not bother me that there are males and females training in the same space.	31.8%	68.2%	53.1%	46.9%	.049
The main reasons for not attending gym on a given day.	Health reasons	59.1%	40.9%	81.3%	18.8%	.040
	Lack of motivation	69.7%	30.3%	40.6%	59.4%	.008
Reasons why members would cancel their gym membership	Health reasons	75.8%	24.2%	96.9%	3.1%	.010
	Loss of motivation	93.9%	6.1%	65.6%	34.4%	.001

Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.

Table 5.10: Statistically significant findings of the cross-tabulations with the gym member clusters.

Question	Specific activities/ responses	Cluster 1 (Tricenarians)	Cluster 2 (Vicenarians)	Pearson Chi Square Exact Significance (2 sided)
<b>The length of time the respondents have been members of their gyms or fitness centres.</b>	Less than one year.	15.2%	31.3%	.013
	Between one and five years.	36.4%	53.1%	
	Between five and ten years.	30.3%	12.5%	
	Longer than ten years.	18.2%	3.1%	
<b>Have you made friends/acquaintances while at the gym?</b>	No	31.8%	62.5%	.005
	Yes	68.2%	37.5%	
<b>How would you classify your relationship with the friends you have made at the gym?</b>	Not applicable	31.8%	56.3%	.033
	Classify them as some of my best and closest friends.	9.1%	3.1%	
	See them both at gym and outside of gym.	12.1%	18.8%	
	Only see them at gym.	47%	21.9%	
<b>Respondent's attitude towards gymming.</b>	I gym because I enjoy it.	37.9%	18.8%	.000
	I gym because I have to.	4.5%	50%	
	I gym because it's my life.	27.3%	6.3%	
	I gym because of the results.	30.3%	25%	

Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.

As shown in Table 5.9 only boxing was deemed to be statistically significantly associated in terms of the activities done by the two clusters in the gym ( $p = 0.028$ ). The pattern of responses indicated that no members of the Vicenarian cluster partook in boxing at their gym, while 15.2% of the Tricenarian cluster engaged in this activity. Enjoyment and pleasure were the only statistically significant reasons for gymming currently ( $p = 0.008$ ). The pattern of responses indicated that 18.8% of the Vicenarians cited enjoyment and pleasure as their reasons for gymming currently, compared with the 47% of the Tricenarians.

In terms of the reasons given for attending a gym with both male and female members, the statement “It does not bother me that there are both males and females in the same training space” ( $p = 0.049$ ), was statistically significant. More members of the Tricenarian cluster (68.2%) were not bothered by males and females in the same training space than the Vicenarian cluster (46.9%).

There was a statistically significant association between the two clusters and the length of time that the respondents had been members of their respective gyms or fitness centres as shown in Table 5.10 ( $p = 0.013$ ). More members of the Tricenarian cluster were members for a period of longer than five years (48.5%) compared with the Vicenarian cluster (15.6%). The majority of the Vicenarian cluster (84.4%) were members for less than five years compared to the Tricenarian cluster (51.6%).

There was a statistical significance ( $p = 0.005$ ) between the two clusters and having made friends at the gym. In terms of this aspect, 68.2% of the Tricenarians had made friends or acquaintances while at the gym, while the inverse is true for the Vicenarians, with 62.5% of the members stating that they had not made any friends or acquaintances at the gym. As a result, there was also a statistically significant association ( $p = 0.033$ ) between the clusters and how they classified their relationship with the friends or acquaintances they made at gym. Of those respondents who had made friends in the gym, 47% of the Tricenarian cluster stated that they only see the friends at gym, while 18.8% of the Vicenarian cluster saw their friends both at gym and outside of gym.

There was a statistically significant difference between the two clusters and the respondents' attitude towards gymming ( $p = 0.000$ ). The majority of the Vicenarian cluster (50%) gymmed because they felt that they had to, while the majority of the Tricenarian cluster gymmed because they enjoyed it (37.9%). More Tricenarians gymmed because of the results (30.3%) and because they felt that gymming was their life (27.3%), in comparison with the Vicenarians (25% and 6.3% respectively).

In terms of the reasons for not attending gym on a given day, a statistically significant association existed between the two clusters and health reasons and a lack of motivation as shown in Table 5.9 ( $p = 0.040$  and  $p = 0.008$  respectively). More members of the Tricenarian cluster (40.9%) were likely not to attend gym due to health reasons than the Vicenarian cluster (18.8%). However, more Vicenarians (59.4%) were likely not to attend gym due to a lack of motivation than Tricenarians (30.3%).

The reasons for cancelling a gym membership showed a similar pattern to the reasons for not attending gym on a given day. With regard to cancelling their gym membership, health reasons and a loss of motivation showed a statistically significant association ( $p = 0.010$  and  $p = 0.001$  respectively) with the two clusters. More members of the Tricenarian cluster cited health reasons (24.2%) as their reason for cancelling their gym membership than the Vicenarian cluster (3.1%). However, more Vicenarians (34.4%) stated that they would cancel their membership due to a loss of motivation than the Tricenarians (6.1%).

### 5.5.3.2 Cross-tabulations for non-gym member clusters

The statistically significant findings of the cross-tabulations computed between the non-gym member clusters and consumer behaviour can be seen in Table 5.11, while all the cross-tabulations computed for this section can be made available upon request.

Each combination was tested, by using Pearson's chi square test for independence, for a statistically significant association through cross-tabulation of the cluster membership with each option of the question investigated. The items are deemed to be statistically significant if the asymptotic significance value was less than 0.005 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Only those combinations, which showed a statistically significant association ( $p < 0.05$ ), were included in Table 5.11 and in the discussion that follows.

**Table 5.6: Statistically significant findings of the cross-tabulations with the non-gym member clusters.**

Question	Specific activities/ responses	Cluster 1 Non-actives		Cluster 2 Somewhat active		Pearson Chi Square Exact Significance (2 sided)
		No	Yes	No	Yes	
What other forms of exercise do the respondents do?	I follow my own exercise routine at home.	100%	0%	53.8%	46.2%	.000

	I go for a walk, run or cycle around the block	88.9%	11.1%	34.5%	65.5%	.000
<b>What reasons, if any, would get the respondents to become members of a gym?</b>	I have no interest in joining a gym anytime soon.	83.3%	16.7%	51.6%	48.4%	.018

**Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.**

As shown in Table 5.11, only three variables had a statistically significant association of less than 0.05.

In terms of the other forms of exercise done by the respondents, two activities had a statistically significant association with the two clusters, namely, following an exercise routine at home ( $p = 0.000$ ) and walking, running or cycling around the block ( $p = 0.000$ ). The pattern of responses indicated that no members of the Non-Active cluster followed their own exercise routine at home, while 46.2% of the Somewhat Active cluster engaged in this activity. On the other hand, 65.5% of the Somewhat Active cluster went for a run, walk, or cycle around the block, compared to the 11.1% of the non-active cluster who partook in this activity.

With regard to what would get the respondents to become members of a gym, only one variable was statistically significantly ( $p = 0.018$ ) associated with the two clusters, namely that the respondents had no interest in joining a gym. Almost half of the members of the Somewhat Active cluster (48.4%) stated that they had no interest in becoming a member of a gym or fitness centre, compared with the 16.7% of the Non-Active cluster. This could be due to the fact that the members of the Somewhat-Active cluster prefer to do other activities rather than attending a gym or fitness centre. This means that 83.3% of the members of the Non-Active cluster would consider becoming a member of a gym or fitness centre under certain circumstances. Some of these circumstances could include the upswing of the economy and the resultant increase in disposable income, lower monthly membership fees (the current fees at Virgin Active for example, excluding any subsidies from their wellness and reward partners, range from R199 to R1 250 per month), or the reduction in the length or costs of gym membership contracts (a standard 24 month gym contract at Virgin Active at R199 per month will cost a member R4 776).

#### 5.5.4 Difference between gym member profile groups with regards to the main reasons for attending a specific gym or fitness centre

A T-test is used to compare the mean value of a continuous variable for two occasions or for two groups (Pallant, 2010). An independent samples T-test assumes the homogeneity of variance, in other words, both groups should have the same variance (Yeager, 2018). An independent samples T-test was computed to determine if statistically significant differences exist with regard to the mean importance value of the eight reasons why the respondents belong to their specific gyms or fitness centres, between the two profiles identified for gym members. Respondents had to rank the responses on a scale from one to eight, with one being the most important reason, and eight being the least important reason, for belonging to their specific gym or fitness centre. This analysis was done in order to answer the fifth secondary objective of this study, namely: Explore the reasons why an individual would choose to join a health and fitness centre or not.

##### 5.5.4.1 Group statistics of the T-test

Table 5.12 shows the group statistics of the T-test and highlights the comparisons between the two gym-member profiles.

Table 5.12: Group statistics of the T-test.

What are the main reasons why you attend your specific gym or fitness centre?		N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Proximity of the gym	1	66	3.24	2.637
	2	32	3.66	2.813
Lowest cost	1	66	4.38	2.299
	2	32	4.38	2.225
Operating hours	1	66	4.85	2.143
	2	32	4.56	1.703
Discounts offered by medical aid provider or insurer	1	66	4.00	2.462
	2	32	4.22	2.661
Large variety of equipment	1	66	4.65	1.593



	2	32	5.00	1.901
Quality of the environment	1	66	4.79	1.544
	2	32	4.22	1.809
Quality of the instructors	1	66	4.91	2.352
	2	32	5.00	2.314
Classes on offer	1	66	5.18	2.560
	2	32	4.97	2.571

Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.

Table 5.12 provides information on the two identified gym-member clusters in terms of the sample size, mean values, and standard deviation for each of the tested variables. As identified in Table 5.6 and Table 5.12, cluster one (the Tricenarians) had a sample size of 66, while cluster two (the Vicenarians) had a sample size of 32. The Tricenarian cluster had higher mean values on three of the tested variables (operating hours, quality of the environment, and classes on offer). The Vicenarians, on the other hand, had higher mean values for four of the variables (proximity of the gym or fitness centre, discounts offered by medical aid or insurer, large variety of equipment, and quality of the instructors). The two clusters had equal mean values for lowest cost (4.38). The highest mean value across the variables was for the classes on offer (5.18), while the lowest mean value was for the proximity of the gym (3.24). The proximity of the gym was the only variable with a mean value of less than four, which indicates that it was a fairly important reason for the respondents in both clusters.

#### 5.5.4.2 Independent samples T-test

While Table 5.12 showed the descriptive statistics for the two identified gym-member profiles, Table 5.13 highlights the results of the independent samples T-test. The results of Levene's Test for Equality of Variances were not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ) for all variables except operating hours and, therefore, the equal variances assumption could be used for all variables except operating hours. The results of Levene's Test for Equality of Variances for operating hours, however, was significant ( $p = 0.038$ ) and, therefore, the equal variances not assumed output was used for this variable. Equal variance assumed implies that the pooled variances were used in the calculation of the T-test as opposed to un-pooled variances and a correction to the degrees of freedom used

when equal variances are not assumed (Yeager, 2018). The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) of the T-test are as follows:

$$H_0 : \mu_{\text{Tricenarians}} = \mu_{\text{Vicenarians}} \text{ (the population means are equal)}$$

$$H_1 : \mu_{\text{Tricenarians}} \neq \mu_{\text{Vicenarians}} \text{ (the population means are not equal)}$$

where  $\mu_{\text{Tricenarians}}$  and  $\mu_{\text{Vicenarians}}$  refer to the population mean values of cluster one (the Tricenarians) and cluster two (the Vicenarians) of the gym-members clusters respectively.

Since  $p > 0.05$ , the null hypothesis is not rejected for each of the reasons. Thus, although the mean values indicated some differences, these differences were not statistically significant differences. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference between the two profile groups with regard to their responses for joining a gym.

**Table 5.13: Independent samples T-test.**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	Degrees of Freedom	Sig (2-tailed)
<b>Closest gym or fitness centre to me</b>	Equal variances assumed	.477	.491	-.713	96	.478
	Equal variances not assumed			-.697	58.037	.489
<b>Cheapest membership fees</b>	Equal variances assumed	.039	.843	.008	96	.994
	Equal variances not assumed			.008	63.302	.994
<b>Operating hours</b>	Equal variances assumed	4.412	.038	.660	96	.511
	Equal variances not assumed			.715	75.625	.477
<b>Discounts offered by medical aid provider or insurer</b>	Equal variances assumed	1.173	.282	-.402	96	.689
	Equal variances not assumed			-.391	57.365	.697

<b>Large variety of equipment</b>	Equal variances assumed	1.115	.294	-.952	96	.343
	Equal variances not assumed			-.896	52.794	.374
<b>Quality of the environment</b>	Equal variances assumed	1.349	.248	1.616	96	.109
	Equal variances not assumed			1.530	53.584	.132
<b>Quality of the instructors</b>	Equal variances assumed	0.47	.828	-.180	96	.857
	Equal variances not assumed			-.181	62.360	.857
<b>Classes on offer</b>	Equal variances assumed	.089	.767	.386	96	.700
	Equal variances not assumed			.385	61.202	.701

Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database.

### 5.5.5 Predicting factors of whether a person will join a gym or not

Binomial logistic regression is a statistical technique used to predict the probability of an event occurring (Laerd Statistics, 2018). In this study, binomial logistic regression was used to determine the probability of a “yes” answer to the decision to join or not to join a gym. This test assisted in addressing the first and third secondary objectives (as shown in Figure 5.1), namely:

- Determine the influences that will affect an individual's decision to become a member of a health and fitness centre.
- Determine those factors that affect an individual's satisfaction with a health and fitness centre as well as the behavioural intentions of the members in terms of their complaining intentions, promotion of the centre, renewal of their membership, or price sensitivity.

Two binomial logistic regressions were computed to determine the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variables. The two binomial logistical regressions, and the variables used in each, are highlighted in Table 5.14.

**Table 5.14: Binomial logistic regression analyses.**

	<b>Independent Variables</b>	<b>Dependent variable</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Motivating factors:</b> Enjoyment, Health Enhancement, Health Necessity, Lifestyle, and Social	Decision to join a gym
	<b>Demographic variables:</b> Gender, Marital status, and Level of education	
<b>2</b>	<b>Demographic variables:</b> Gender, Marital status, and Level of education	Decision to join a gym

Source: Researcher's own composition.

#### **5.5.5.1 Binomial logistic regression model with the inclusion of the five factors**

The first binomial logistic regression model was used to predict whether the independent variables namely the five motivating factors and the demographic variables of gender, marital status, and level of education, had an effect on the dependent variable of the decision to join a gym. Marital status and level of education were ordinal variables, each with a number of categories. The five categories for marital status were Single, Married, Living with partner but not married, Divorced, and Widowed. Four dummy variables were defined to represent this variable with Widowed as the reference category. In terms of level of education, the eight categories were less than Grade 12, Grade 12, Higher Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor's Degree, Honours Degree, Master's Degree, and Doctorate. Seven dummy variables were defined to represent this variable, with Master's Degree as the reference category. The results of this test are shown in Table 5.15.

**Table 5.15: Results of binomial logistic regression model with the inclusion of the five factors.**

	<b>Correct prediction classification Block 0</b>	<b>Correct prediction classification Block 1</b>	<b>Nagelkerke R Square</b>		<b>Hosmer and Lemeshow Test of Significance</b>	
	<b>53.1%</b>	<b>79.4%</b>	<b>499</b>		<b>.898</b>	
	<b>B</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Wald</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Odds Ratio Exp (B)</b>
<b>Enjoyment</b>	.253	.280	.818	1	.366	1.288

<b>Health Enhancement</b>	.819	.474	2.984	1	.084*	2.269
<b>Health Necessity</b>	-.083	.338	.060	1	.806	.920
<b>Lifestyle</b>	1.529	.376	16.551	1	.000***	4.613
<b>Social</b>	-.292	.245	1.418	1	.234	.747
<b>Gender</b>	-.325	.429	.575	1	.448	.722
<b>Single</b>			7.393	4	.117	
<b>Married</b>	-1.185	1.538	.594	1	.441	.306
<b>Living with partner, but not married</b>	.500	1.488	.113	1	.737	1.649
<b>Divorced</b>	-.525	1.340	.153	1	.695	.592
<b>Widowed</b>	.467	1.370	.116	1	.733	1.595
			6.523	8	.589	
<b>Less than Grade 12</b>	-.721	.603	1.432	1	.231	.486
<b>Grade 12</b>	24.200	40192.969	.000	1	1.000	32364687850.892
<b>Higher certificate</b>	-1.075	.669	2.579	1	.108	.341
<b>Diploma</b>	.750	1.760	.182	1	.670	2.118
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	-1.076	.737	2.129	1	.145	.341
<b>Honours degree</b>	-.223	1.011	.049	1	.826	.800
<b>Master's degree</b>	.037	.620	.004	1	.952	1.038
<b>Doctorate degree</b>	17.530	40192.969	.000	1	1.000	41054477.742
<b>Constant</b>	-6.539	2.187	8.941	1	.003***	.001

Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database. \* indicates a statistical significance with  $p < 0.1$ , \*\* when  $p < 0.05$ , and \*\*\* when  $p < 0.01$ .

The Hosmer and Lemeshow Test had a significance value of  $p = 0.898$  ( $p > 0.05$ ), thereby indicating acceptable fit as the null hypothesis states adequate fit, and the Nagelkerke R Square value was fairly high at 0.499 (49.9%). The overall correct prediction classification improved from 53.1% (block 0) to 79.4% (block 1).

An odds ratio greater than one indicates that the independent variables in question will increase the probability of an individual joining a gym, while a value of less than one will decrease the probability of an individual joining a gym.

Two variables were deemed statistically significant (at the 10% and 1% level of significance respectively) in this test, namely the Health Enhancement factor ( $p = 0.084$ ) and the Lifestyle factor ( $p = 0.00$ ), which had an odds ratio value of 2.269 and 4.613 respectively. This means that every unit increase in the Lifestyle factor increased the probability of an individual joining a gym by 361.3% ( $4.613 - 1 \times 100$ ), while every unit increase in the Health Enhancement factor increased the probability of an individual joining a gym by 126.9% ( $2.269 - 1 \times 100$ ).

#### **5.5.5.2 Binomial logistic regression model without the five factors**

The second binomial logistic regression model was used to predict whether the independent variables of gender, marital status, and level of education, had an effect on the dependent variable of becoming a gym member, without the influence of the motivating factors. Marital status and level of education were ordinal variables, each with a number of categories. The five categories for marital status were Single, Married, Living with partner but not married, Divorced, and Widowed. Four dummy variables were defined to represent this variable with Widowed as the reference category. In terms of level of education, the eight categories were less than Grade 12, Grade 12, Higher Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor's Degree, Honours Degree, Master's Degree, and Doctorate. Seven dummy variables were computed to represent this variable, with Master's Degree as the reference category. The results of this test are shown in Table 5.16.

Table 5.16: Results of the binomial logistic regression model without the five factors.

	Correct prediction classification Block 0	Correct prediction classification Block 1	Nagelkerke R Square		Hosmer and Lemeshow Test of Significance	
	53.1%	64.1%	.129		.801	
	<b>B</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Wald</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Exp (B)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	-.302	.330	.838	1	.360	.739
<b>Single</b>			7.228	4	.124	
<b>Married</b>	-.902	1.439	.393	1	.531	.406
<b>Living with partner, but not married</b>	.608	1.375	.196	1	.658	1.837
<b>Divorced</b>	-.170	1.285	.017	1	.895	.844
<b>Widowed</b>	.577	1.306	.195	1	.659	1.781
			9.731	8	.284	
<b>Less than Grade 12</b>	-.836	.481	3.021	1	.082*	.433
<b>Grade 12</b>	21.510	40192.969	.000	1	1.000	2196865231.243
<b>Higher certificate</b>	-.756	.528	2.048	1	.152	.469
<b>Diploma</b>	.243	1.525	.025	1	.873	1.275
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	-1.515	.579	6.842	1	.009***	.220
<b>Honours degree</b>	-.378	.854	.196	1	.658	.685
<b>Master's degree</b>	-.220	.476	.214	1	.644	.803
<b>Doctorate degree</b>	20.302	40192.969	.000	1	1.000	656068865.760
<b>Constant</b>	.595	1.377	.187	1	.666	1.813

Source: Researcher's own composition of information collected from the SPSS database. \* indicates a statistical significance with  $p < 0.1$ , \*\* when  $p < 0.05$ , and \*\*\* when  $p < 0.01$ .

The Hosmer and Lemeshow Test had a significance value of  $p = 0.801$ , thereby indicating acceptable fit as the null hypothesis states adequate fit, and the Nagelkerke R Square value was low at 0.129 (12.9%). The overall correct prediction classification improved from 53.1% (block 0) to 64.1% (block 1).

An odds ratio greater than one indicates that the independent variables in question will increase the probability of an individual joining a gym, while a value of less than one will decrease the probability of an individual joining a gym.

Two variables were deemed statistically significant (at the 10% and 1% level of significance) in this test, namely the Bachelor's degree level of education ( $p = 0.09$ ) and less than Grade 12 ( $p = 0.082$ ), which had an odds ratio value of 0.220 and 0.433 respectively. The results of this test indicated that the probability of joining a gym decreased by 354.5% ( $\frac{1}{0.220} - 1 \times 100$ ) when the respondent had a Bachelor's degree in reference to a Master's degree and 130.9% ( $\frac{1}{0.433} - 1 \times 100$ ) when the respondent had an education of less than Matric in reference to a Master's degree. From this test, it would appear as though education is the only demographic variable that plays a role in predicting whether an individual will join a gym or not.

## 5.6 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

A brief summary of the main findings of the statistical analyses done in this study are presented in Table 5.17 below.



**Table 5.17: Summary of the main findings of the different analyses.**

Descriptive statistical analysis	
<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>Describe the respondents in terms of their demographic profile, and to determine the response profile of the respondents with regard to their attitudes to fitness and health, and their reasons for attending or not attending a health and fitness centre.</p>	<p><b>Main findings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sample comprised mainly married females in the Gauteng Province, who had a Bachelor's degree, were permanently employed, and were between the ages of 20 and 29.</li> <li>• Most of the respondents agreed that exercise was important, that they felt good after a work-out session, and that exercise was good for them. Furthermore, they indicated that exercise was an enjoyable, and not a boring, activity.</li> <li>• Getting into shape was the most indicated answer for initially joining a gym, while increasing general fitness was provided as the majority reason for gymming currently.</li> <li>• Cardiovascular training, circuit work, and free weights were the most popular activities done by the respondents in a gym.</li> <li>• The proximity of the gym was indicated as the most important reason for attending a specific gym, while the classes on offer were the least important factor for the respondents.</li> <li>• The poor quality of the equipment in some gyms was noted as the third least liked thing by the respondents.</li> <li>• A running or cycling track was the most requested activity that the respondents would like to see offered at their gyms.</li> <li>• The main reason for cancelling a membership (or not belonging to a gym) would be finances, while a large number of respondents indicated that they would cancel their membership if the gym became too overcrowded.</li> <li>• Binding contracts and bad experiences were some of the reasons offered by the respondents for not wanting to join a gym.</li> <li>• Non-gym members go for a walk around the block or follow their own exercise routine at home instead of attending a gym.</li> <li>• Cheaper membership fees, customisation of membership, and fewer people would motivate some respondents to join a gym.</li> </ul>

Exploratory factor analysis	
<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>Determine the underlying factor structure of the data and to create a more manageable number of variables for the items in Section B of the questionnaire.</p>	<p><b>Main findings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five motivating factors were identified.</li> <li>• Health Enhancement had the highest mean value, while Lifestyle had the lowest mean value. Overall, the gym members had higher mean values for the five factors than the non-gym members.</li> <li>• Enjoyment and Health Enhancement had the strongest correlation in both groups, while Enjoyment and Social had the lowest correlation in both groups.</li> </ul>
Profiling gym and non-gym members (Cluster analysis)	
<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>Investigate exploratively whether a “gym” respondent profile and a “non-gym” respondent profile could be identified.</p>	<p><b>Main findings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four clusters were identified - two for gym members and two for non-gym members.</li> <li>• Health Enhancement was the most important differentiating factor between the gym member clusters, while Social was the most important differentiating factor between the non-gym member clusters.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians had higher mean values than the Vicenarians and also appeared to have higher levels of loyalty. They also tended to visit the gym more frequently than the Vicenarians.</li> <li>• The Somewhat Active cluster had higher mean values than the Non-Active cluster.</li> <li>• The Somewhat Active cluster’s main reason (majority category) for not belonging to a gym was that there were too many people.</li> </ul>
Consumer behaviour of the profiles (Cross-tabulations)	
<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>Determine the relationship between consumer behaviour and the type of respondent</p>	<p><b>Main findings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Tricenarians did boxing and gymmed for enjoyment and pleasure than the Vicenarians.</li> <li>• The Vicenarians were more likely to not attend gym or cancel their membership due to a lack of motivation, while the Tricenarians did not attend gym or cancelled their membership due to health reasons.</li> <li>• More Vicenarians belonged to a gym for less than five years, while more Tricenarians belonged to a gym for a period of longer than five years.</li> <li>• More Tricenarians have made friends at a gym than Vicenarians.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians gym because they enjoy it, while the Vicenarians gym because they feel that they have to.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most of the Non-Active cluster would consider the possibility of joining a gym under certain circumstances.</li> </ul>
<b>Reasons for attending a gym or fitness centre (T-test)</b>	
<b>Purpose</b> Determine if statistically significant differences exist with regard to the mean importance value of the eight reasons why the respondents belong to their specific gyms or fitness centres, between the two profiles identified for gym members.	<b>Main findings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Tricenarians had higher mean values for operating hours, quality of the environment, and classes on offer. The Vicenarians had higher mean values for proximity of the gym, discounts offered, variety of equipment, and the quality of the instructors.</li> <li>The proximity of the gym was of fairly high importance to both clusters.</li> <li>There were no statistically significant differences between the two clusters.</li> </ul>
<b>Predicting gym membership (Binomial logistic regression)</b>	
<b>Purpose</b> Determine the probability of a “yes” answer to the decision to join or not to join a gym.	<b>Main findings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two models were computed.</li> <li>Two variables were significant in the first model, namely Health Enhancement and Lifestyle.</li> <li>One variable was statistically significant in the second model, namely the level of education.</li> </ul>

Source: Researcher’s own composition.

## 5.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the descriptive and inferential statistical analysis of the primary data was discussed. The demographic profile of the respondents was described followed by a discussion of their attitudes towards health and fitness. The reasons for belonging or not belonging to a gym were identified and described. Thereafter, the inferential statistical analyses were discussed.

From the Exploratory Factor Analysis, five motivating factors were identified and were used to draw comparisons between the gym member and non-gym member groups of respondents. The results showed that the gym member group had higher mean values across the five factors than the non-gym member group. The respondents from both groups agreed with the factors that loaded onto Health Enhancement and disagreed with the statements that loaded onto Lifestyle.

The second inferential analysis was a cluster analysis, which resulted in the development of two profiles of gym members as well as two non-gym member profiles. The most important differentiating factor between the two clusters was Health Enhancement, while the least important differentiating factor between the two clusters was Social. The Social factor was, however, the most important differentiating factor between the non-gym member clusters, with the Somewhat Active cluster having higher mean values across the factors.

Once the profiles were developed, the consumer behaviour of these profiles was discussed with specific reference to those aspects which were statistically significant between the two clusters. An independent T-test was computed to provide further enhancement of the profile behaviour. Overall, the test showed no statistically significant differences between the two clusters in terms of the aspects measured. The final test discussed in this chapter was the binomial logistic regression, which was computed to determine the probability of predicting gym membership based on a determined set of variables.

This concludes the statistical analysis of this study. In the next, and final, chapter, a summary of the results and conclusions will be provided. The limitations of this study and recommendations for future studies will also be indicated.

# **CHAPTER 6**

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapters provided the background to the study, a review of literature related to the study, the research methodology employed in this study, and the findings of the survey that was done by performing an empirical data analysis. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overarching conclusion to this study on the consumer behaviour typology of members of health and fitness centres.

In this chapter, a brief review of the previous chapters will be provided, followed by the reflection and synchronisation of the individual research objectives with the findings of the study, as well as a complete summary of the results. The conclusions and recommendations related to each objective will be highlighted. The chapter will conclude with a discussion on the assumptions and limitations of this study, as well as the identification of possible future research areas related to this topic. The conclusion of this chapter will provide a summary of the main findings and discussions of this study.

### **6.2 REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS**

This study comprised six chapters, each dealing with a specific concept related to this study. A brief overview of Chapters One to Five is discussed below.

#### **6.2.1 Chapter 1 – Introduction and background to the study**

Chapter One provided the background to, and purpose of, this study. In this section, a brief overview of consumer behaviour, sport, and exercise were discussed. From there, the problem statement was developed and the primary research objective, as well as six secondary research objectives, was formulated. A brief overview of the research methodology used in this study was also provided. The chapter concluded by providing a chapter layout for the rest of the dissertation.

### **6.2.2 Chapter 2 – Consumer behaviour**

Chapter Two was the first of two literature review chapters in this study and focused specifically on consumers and their behaviour. The chapter commenced with a definition of a consumer and consumer behaviour. A model of consumer behaviour was provided and is depicted in Figure 2.1. This was followed by a discussion on the consumer as a decision-maker and problem solver, as well as the consumer decision-making process (presented in Figure 2.3 and Figure 2.4). The internal and external factors that influence consumer behaviour (Figure 2.5) were identified and addressed.

This chapter also highlighted the concepts of consumer satisfaction, consumer retention, consumer loyalty, market segmentation, targeting, positioning, and consumer typologies and profiles. The chapter concluded with a discussion on consumer behaviour in sport, sporting activities, and exercise.

### **6.2.3 Chapter 3 – The South African sport and exercise business environment**

Chapter Three was the second literature review chapter of this study and focused on the South African sport and exercise business environment. This chapter began with a brief history of sport and exercise, including the history of health and fitness centres. This was followed by a look at modern day health and fitness centres. The chapter concluded with a discussion on the composition of the business environment of health and fitness centres (as depicted in Figure 3.1). This included a detailed discussion on the micro, market, and macro environments of a health and fitness centre.

### **6.2.4 Chapter 4 – Research methodology**

Chapter Four provided an overview of the research methodology used to collect the primary data for this study. The research process followed in this study was depicted in Figure 4.1. Key research terms were defined and the research design was highlighted. Following this, the research approach followed in this study, namely, quantitative research, was discussed. The sampling design used in this study, including the sample size and the sampling technique, was discussed. A detailed description of the data collection instrument, as well as the content and

format of the questions used in the questionnaire, followed. A brief overview of the descriptive and inferential statistical techniques used in this study was provided and the measures to ensure validity and reliability of the data were mentioned. The chapter concluded with a brief note on the ethical considerations applicable to this study.

## **6.2.5 Chapter 5 – Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis**

Chapter Five reported on the results of the analyses done on the primary data. The chapter commenced with a brief overview of the data collection process and a look at the structure of the chapter (Figure 5.1). The descriptive statistical analysis was then discussed with the intention of describing the respondents in terms of their demographic profile, determining the response profile in terms of the respondents' attitudes towards health and fitness, and to identify the reasons for attending or not attending a health and fitness centre.

Five inferential statistical analyses were computed on the data in order to make inferences about the data. The exploratory factor analysis identified five motivating factors for attending a gym, while the cluster analysis identified two gym member profiles and two non-gym member profiles. Various cross-tabulations were computed to determine the relationship between the different profiles and their consumer behaviour. A T-test was computed to determine whether any significant differences existed between the two gym member profiles in terms of the reasons for belonging to a specific gym and to provide further enhancement of profile behaviour. A binary logistic regression was done to determine the probability of gym membership based on a determined set of variables. A summary of the main findings of the different statistical analyses was presented in Table 5.17.

This section briefly summarised the previous five chapters of this study before commencing with the conclusions and recommendations of the study. In the next section, the individual Secondary Research Objectives will be discussed.

## 6.3 REFLECTIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS LINKED TO EACH SECONDARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

In this section, a reflection on each of the secondary research objectives will be provided. A comparison will be drawn between the literature and the findings of the primary, or empirical, data to identify any similarities or differences. Conclusions for each objective will be drawn and recommendations will be made based on the literature and findings from the primary data analysis.

### 6.3.1 The influences that affect an individual's decision to become a member of a health and fitness centre (secondary research objective 1)

This objective aimed to identify the influences that would affect an individual's decision to become a member of a health and fitness centre. Table 6.1 highlights these influences from the empirical and secondary data, as well as provides the appropriate conclusions and recommendations.

Table 6.1: Reflections on secondary research objective 1

OBJECTIVE
Determine the influences that will affect an individual's decision to become a member of a health and fitness centre.
FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Figure 2.5 highlighted the different factors that can have an influence on consumer behaviour and decision-making. These include various internal and external factors as discussed in Section 2.3 and Section 2.4 respectively, and included aspects such as motivation, perception, personality, attitude, learning, reference groups, family, social class, and culture. These factors may have an influence on whether an individual decides to join a gym or not.</li><li>Section 2.6 highlights some of the influences that will affect whether an individual decides to join a gym or not. These include general health and well-being, weight control, self-esteem, maintaining fitness, and feeling good, among others.</li></ul>
FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that exercise was more fun with friends, however, it was not really a social activity.</li></ul>



- A number of internal factors showed a high level of agreement among the participants, namely that it was important to remain fit and healthy, that the respondents felt good after a workout session, that exercise lowered the respondents' stress levels, and that exercise boosted their self-confidence.
- The top motivators that would get the respondents to become a member of a health and fitness centre were lower membership fees, the ability to customise their membership according to the equipment that they would use, fewer people in the centre, and if a close friend or family member were to join as well.
- The majority of the respondents attended a health and fitness centre to increase their general fitness, lose weight, or for stress relief and relaxation.
- Five motivating factors were identified that could affect an individual's decision to become a member of a health and fitness centre, namely Enjoyment, Health Enhancement, Health Necessity, Lifestyle, or Social.
- The Health Enhancement factor had the highest level of agreement among the respondents, which indicates that it is an important motivator to become a member of a health and fitness centre. The Lifestyle factor, on the other hand, had the lowest level of agreement among the respondents, which indicates that it is not an important motivator in gym membership.
- The Health Enhancement and Lifestyle factors, as well as education, were deemed to be statistically significant predictors of gym membership.
- Enjoyment and pleasure were statistically significant reasons for gymming currently between the two identified gym member clusters, namely, the Tricenarian and Vicenarian clusters. These two clusters are discussed in further detail in Section 6.4.

## CONCLUSIONS

- Internal motivating factors were more important to the respondents than the external motivating factors of the consumer behavioural model.
- While the total respondent group was split nearly in half, approximately half of the respondent group that had no interest in joining a gym would never join a gym, while the other half would consider joining a gym under certain circumstances.
- The Health Enhancement Factor is an important motivator in becoming a member of a health and fitness centre. This indicated that the respondents believed that it was important to remain fit and healthy. They felt good after a workout session and they believed that the sweat and pain they experienced after a workout session was worth it. The respondents found working out to be a form of stress relief, and that it boosted their self-confidence levels. Furthermore, they perceived exercise to be a way of life.
- The Tricenarians (30 to 39 years of age) gymmed more for pleasure and enjoyment than the Vicenarians (20 to 29 years of age). This implies that with age, a person tends to enjoy gym more.
- These findings collaborate the findings from previous studies on this topic as discussed in the theoretical chapters.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Health and fitness centres should focus on the internal factors of motivation when appealing to new members in their marketing campaigns, be it through mass media or on an individual basis.
- The older respondents tend to gym more for pleasure and enjoyment rather than for the results. The pleasure and enjoyment a workout session offers should be highlighted when marketing to older

members, while the benefits that an individual can get from a workout session should be the focus when marketing to the younger members of the target market.

### 6.3.2 The specific activities members pursue at a health and fitness centre (secondary research objective 2)

The aim of this research objective was to determine what activities gym members are likely to pursue at a health and fitness centre, as well as what activities that they would like to be offered. Table 6.2 highlights these activities, from both the literature and empirical data, as well as the conclusions and recommendations of this objective.

**Table 6.2: Reflections on secondary research objective 2.**

OBJECTIVE
Determine the specific activities that members pursue at a health and fitness centre.
FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE
A wide range of activities are on offer at the various health and fitness centres which the respondents visited (see Section 3.3 for a full discussion of these activities). The most popular activities included cardiovascular training, resistance training, core stability training, strength, and toning, equipment and exercises, as well as classes and swimming pools.
FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very large majority of gym members do more than one activity in the gym, with the most popular activities being cardiovascular training, circuit work, and free weights.</li> <li>• Classes, body weight exercises, swimming, and cross-fit style training were other popular activities undertaken by gym members. A small percentage of respondents partook in boxing or were willing to do whatever an instructor told them to do.</li> <li>• More than half of the respondents felt that it was somewhat important for a gym to have the latest and most modern equipment, while a number of respondents felt it was somewhat important for a gym to offer supplementary services such as childcare facilities, saunas, or cafeterias.</li> <li>• The modal category of the respondents indicated that they would like to have a running or cycling track at their gym, while other respondents indicated that the gyms needed more equipment. Squash courts, classes of different levels of intensity, as well as swimming pools were also popular activities that they would like to have on offer.</li> <li>• The variety of equipment on offer was more important to the respondents than the quality of the instructors.</li> <li>• Boxing was deemed to be a statistically significant activity between the two gym member clusters, with more Tricenarians having partaken in this activity than the Vicenarians.</li> </ul>

## CONCLUSIONS

- Members pursue a variety of different activities in a health and fitness centre. With the exception of the classes, very few members do those activities that they are instructed to do by the instructors.
- The respondents felt that it was important that the centre has the latest equipment and that supplementary services be available.
- A running or cycling track was the activity that most of the respondents would like to see on offer at their respective health and fitness centres.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Health and fitness centres should ensure that there is a variety of up-to-date equipment on offer to attract and retain their members.
- The latest, most modern equipment should be available, and all equipment should be in working order. Furthermore, health and fitness centres should consider introducing supplementary services, such as childcare facilities, cafeterias, and the like, should they not be available.
- The respondents indicated that they would like to have an expanded range of activities on offer by health and fitness centres. The centres must consider implementing some of these activities in order to attract new members or to increase the satisfaction of the current members.
- A small percentage of the Tricenarians indicated that they partook in boxing at their respective centres. As this is a new activity that has been added, it is recommended that boxing, or boxing style exercises or classes, be introduced in order to attract this segment of the target market.
- Consideration should be given to the implementation of indoor running or cycling tracks as this was the activity most frequently requested activity by the respondents.

### 6.3.3 The factors that affect the satisfaction of an individual as well as their behavioural intentions (secondary research objective 3)

The aim of this objective was to identify those factors that would affect an individual's satisfaction with their health and fitness centre. Furthermore, this objective aimed to determine the behavioural intentions of the individuals in terms of complaining intentions, promotion of the centre, membership renewal, or price sensitivity. Table 6.3 showcases these factors from the secondary and empirical data, as well as the conclusions and recommendations applicable to this objective.

**Table 6.3: Reflections on secondary research objective 3.**

## OBJECTIVE

Determine those factors that affect an individual's satisfaction with a health and fitness centre as well as the behavioural intentions of the members in terms of their complaining intentions, promotion of the centre, renewal of their membership, or price sensitivity.

## **FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE**

Having satisfied consumers is crucial for any business to succeed. Satisfied customers are more likely to make repeat purchases/visits or promote the business. Consumer retention refers to creating long-lasting relationships with consumers, while consumer loyalty refers to that consumer continuing to support your business irrespective of competing businesses or products. The concepts of consumer satisfaction, retention, and loyalty are discussed in greater detail in Section 2.4.

## **FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS**

- The convenience of the gym, in terms of its accessibility, location, and operating hours, was the aspect that was liked the most by the respondents, followed by the general atmosphere of the gym and the professionalism of the staff.
- The social aspect of the gym was the aspect that was liked the least, followed by the supplementary benefits (or lack thereof), and the poor quality of the equipment.
- The majority of respondents were happy with their gyms and were very likely to renew their gym membership, however, finances and over-crowding were the main reasons for members to cancel their membership.
- Health reasons and a lack of motivation were statistically significant between the two gym member clusters in terms of cancelling a membership or not attending gym on a given day. The Tricenarians cited health reasons, while the Vicenarians cited a lack of motivation as the main reason for cancelling their membership.
- More Vicenarians belonged to a gym for a period of less than five years compared to the Tricenarians, who had belonged to a gym for a period of more than five years. Due to the age difference between these two groups, this makes sense.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

- The convenience and atmosphere of the gym are of utmost importance to the gym members.
- The price of memberships, especially in the challenging economic state of the country, as well as overcrowding, were found to be the main reasons for people to cancel their memberships.
- The Tricenarians have belonged to a gym for a longer period of time. The individuals in this age category (30 and above) would have had more years of earning money and are more likely to have more disposable income than the younger respondents, who in most cases would have only just entered the job market.
- As people get older, they are more prone to health problems which could result in them not attending the gym on a given day. The younger respondents often tend to lack the motivation and willpower to attend gym.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Health and fitness centres should, as far as possible, try and accommodate their members. This could include opening earlier in the morning or staying open later in the evenings. They should also strive to maintain the professionalism of their staff and ensure that the equipment is always in working order.
- Health and fitness centres should restructure their packages in such a way as to keep the membership fees as low as possible as this was found to be a major barrier to gym membership.

- The health benefits of regular exercise should be part of the advertising campaign of health and fitness centres if they wish to attract older members.

### 6.3.4 Aspects that motivate an individual to exercise, join or remain a member (secondary research objective 4)

This objective aimed to determine those aspects that motivate an individual to exercise, join, or remain a member of a health and fitness centre. These aspects, as well as the conclusions and recommendations of this objective, are highlighted in Table 6.4.

**Table 6.4: Reflections on secondary research objective 4.**

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>
Determine what motivates an individual to exercise, join, or remain a member of a health and fitness centre.
<b>FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE</b>
Many motivators exist that may encourage people to exercise, to join a gym, or to remain a member of a gym (see Section 2.6 for a further discussion). These motives could include increasing general health and fitness, weight loss, increased self-esteem, socialisation, stress reduction, or as per their doctor's recommendation.
<b>FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of the respondents joined a gym initially to get into shape or as a part of a lifestyle change.</li> <li>• The cost of a gym membership was the main reason why people chose not to belong to a gym.</li> <li>• Lower membership fees, customisable membership, and fewer people, would motivate the respondents to join a gym, as would month-to-month membership and not being tied to a single gym in the franchise.</li> <li>• The Health Enhancement factor emerged as the most important aspect for both of the gym-member clusters, while Socialisation was the most important of the five motivating factors for the non-gym member clusters.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians are more inclined to gym because they enjoy it and it is an inherent part of their life, while the Vicenarians are more inclined to gym because they feel that it is something that they have to do (an obligation) and because of the physical results.</li> </ul>
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting into shape is the main reason people choose to join a health and fitness centre, while the cost of the membership is a barrier to gym membership.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians gym because they enjoy it, while the Vicenarians feel that attending a gym is something that they have to do (an obligation).</li> </ul>

- The findings were in line with the findings of previous studies on this topic.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- As an individual grows older, they tend to see gym as more of a pleasurable activity rather than as an essential activity. This fact should be used by health and fitness centres should they wish to attract and retain more members for a specific segment of the market.

### 6.3.5. Reasons for choosing a fitness centre (secondary research objective 5)

This objective aimed to explore the reasons why an individual would choose to belong, or not to belong, to a health and fitness centre. The reasons identified from the primary and secondary data, as well as the conclusions and recommendations of this objective, are described in Table 6.5.

**Table 6.5: Reflections on secondary research objective 5.**

OBJECTIVE
Explore the reasons why an individual would choose to join a health and fitness centre or not.
FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE
From its humble beginnings when man had to outrun predators, to preparing soldiers for war, physical fitness has always been an important part of human life. The first commercial fitness centre opened in 1840 and comprised very basic equipment such as lightweights and parallel bars. Modern day fitness centres, however, have a variety of equipment and activities to suit their consumers' needs. This includes treadmills, resistance and strength machines, swimming pools, or the offering of classes. Section 3.2.5 gives a brief overview of the history of personal fitness and the start of health and fitness centres, while Section 3.3 gives an overview of modern day health and fitness centres.
FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS

- The members who opted to join a conventional health and fitness centre were not bothered by the other gym members, and they preferred the equipment and classes that these gyms offered. The overall atmosphere of these gyms as well as the socialisation possibilities also attracted people to these gyms.
- A large number of members felt that it was somewhat important that a gym offered supplementary services, such as childcare facilities, saunas, or cafeterias.
- The proximity of the gym emerged as the most important reason for selecting a particular gym, followed by the price of the membership fees.
- The classes on offer, the operating hours, and the quality of the environment, were of greater importance to the Tricenarians when selecting a gym, while the equipment on offer, the quality of the instructors, the discounts offered by medical aid or insurance, and the proximity of the gym, were of greater importance to the Vicenarians.

## CONCLUSIONS

- The classes, operating hours and quality of the environment are important aspects to the Tricenarian cluster when selecting a gym or fitness centre. This ties in with the enjoyment and pleasure aspect of gymming for the older individuals.
- The equipment, quality of the instructors, membership discounts, and the proximity of the gym are important aspects to the Vicenarian cluster when choosing a gym or fitness centre. This supports the finding that the younger respondents gym because they feel that they have to or because of the results of exercise.
- The Tricenarians were less concerned with the other gym members in their gym than the Vicenarians. This could imply that as people grow older, they are more in tune with themselves and less sensitive about their physique. They, therefore, care less about what other people think of them when they are at the gym than the younger respondents who are more conscious of their physique.
- The Tricenarians were more likely to make friends in the gym than the Vicenarians. However, the Vicenarians are more likely to see these friends outside of the gym, while the Tricenarians are more likely to see these friends at the gym only.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The promotion of socialisation aspects, including group classes and training, should be aimed at those members who are aged 30 and above, while the promotion of more individualised training, especially in terms of the equipment and instructors, should be targeted at the younger gym members.
- A separate space for the younger members to train, where they do not need to feel sensitive about their physique or what other gym members think of them, can be considered as an alternative way to provide more value to this segment.

### 6.3.6 Other forms of exercise done by non-consumers besides attending a health and fitness centre (secondary research objective 6)

The aim of this objective was to identify any other forms of exercise done by non-consumers other than attending a health and fitness centre. The reason for the inclusion of this research objective was to assist health and fitness centres in understanding why people choose not to belong to a health and fitness centre and what activities are done in its place. By offering certain activities, health and fitness centres may be able to attract some of these consumers. The results of these findings as well as the conclusions and recommendations applicable to this objective are shown in Table 6.6.

**Table 6.6: Reflections on secondary research objective 6.**

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>
Identify other forms of exercise done by non-consumers and the reasons why these consumers choose not to belong to a health and fitness centre
<b>FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE</b>
No theoretical underpinning could be found.
<b>FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The majority of the respondents who did not attend a gym or fitness centre walked, ran, or cycled around the block, or followed their own exercise routines at home, as alternatives to belonging to a gym.</li><li>• Other sporting disciplines, such as rugby, soccer, or dancing, were also done by the respondents.</li><li>• A large majority of the Non-Active cluster would consider joining a gym under certain circumstances.</li></ul>
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approximately half of the Somewhat Active cluster partake in other forms of exercise and have no interest in joining a gym.</li><li>• The majority of the Non-Active cluster would consider joining a gym if, for example, the membership fees were cheaper, among other circumstances.</li></ul>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To attract new members, health and fitness centres could consider implementing measures that will result in lowering their membership fees, customisable memberships, or a reduction in the number of people visiting the gym (within reason). This could be coupled to the lowering of fees, and other</li></ul>



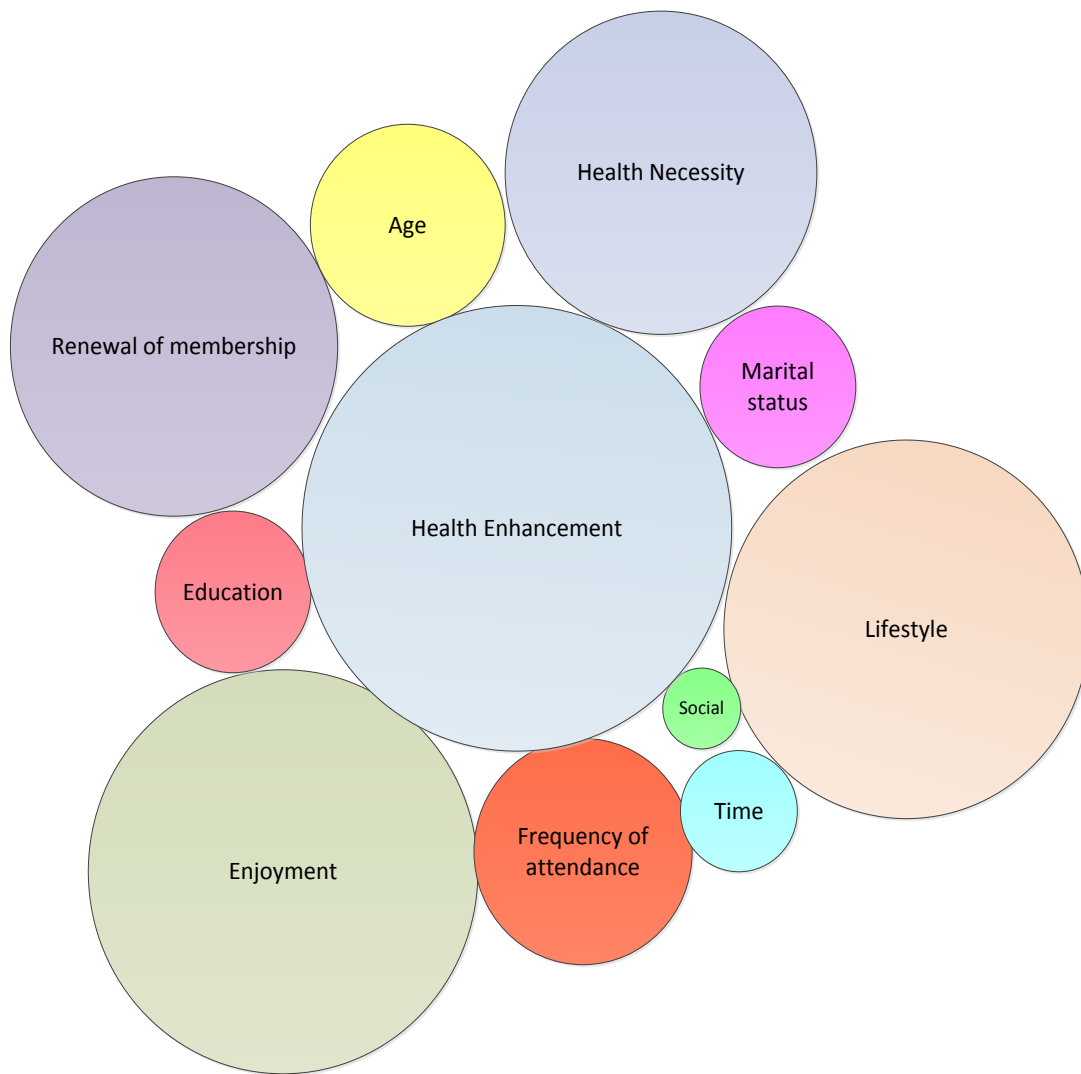
incentives, for potential members to attend gym during slower periods of the day when gym attendance is low.

- Some of the respondents indicated that they would consider joining a health and fitness centre if a close friend or family member joined as well. Health and fitness centres could consider implementing two-for-one membership packages. This could also result in an overall increase in gym membership.
- The convenience of the centre in terms of its location and operating times should also be taken into consideration when reaching out to new members. A more localised marketing campaign can then be used to reduce marketing costs for the gym.

In this section, the six secondary objectives identified for this study were addressed and the relevant conclusions and recommendations for each research objective were identified. In the next section, the primary research objective will be addressed.

## **6.4 ADDRESSING THE PRIMARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

The primary research objective of this study was to develop a consumer typology of the members of a health and fitness centre, based on the members' consumer behaviour. Figure 6.1 highlights the composition of the two identified profiles of gym members based on the findings of this study. The size of each circle represents the importance of each variable in the formation of the profile. Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3 highlight the two clusters and the significant findings of each. These two clusters were discussed in greater detail in Section 5.5.2 of this dissertation.



**Figure 6.1: Bubble diagram of the key variables of the gym membership profile indicating the relative importance of each variable. (Source: Researcher's own composition).**

### Cluster

- Tricenarians

### Variables

- Health Enhancement (4.77)
- Enjoyment (4.2)
- Lifestyle (3.43)
- Health Necessity (4.24)
- Renewal of membership (Very likely)
- Frequency of attendance (A couple of days a week)
- Age (30-39 years)
- Education (Honours)
- Marital Status (Married)
- Time spent (30-60 minutes)
- Social (3.45)

### Significant findings

- The Tricenarians had higher mean values for the five motivating factors than the Vicenarians.
- The Tricenarians were more loyal to their gyms and were more likely to renew their membership.
- The second highest percentage in terms of frequency of attendance was once a day.
- A small number of respondents in this cluster did boxing in their gyms.
- Almost half of the members in this cluster gym for enjoyment and pleasure.
- This cluster is less concerned with the gender of the other people in the gym.
- The main reason for not attending gym or cancelling their membership is health reasons.
- More members of this cluster had belonged to a gym for a period of longer than five years.
- More Tricenarians had made friends in the gym. However, the majority of this cluster only see these friends at the gym.
- The Tricenarians gym because they enjoyed it.
- Operating hours, quality of the environment, and the classes on offer are important aspects of a gym to this cluster.

**Figure 6.2: Significant findings of the Tricenarian cluster.**

### Cluster

- Vicenarians

### Variables

- Health Enhancement (4.09)
- Enjoyment (3.14)
- Lifestyle (2.64)
- Health Necessity (3.58)
- Renewal of membership (Somewhat likely)
- Frequency of attendance (A couple of days a week)
- Age (20-29 years)
- Education (Bachelors)
- Marital Status (Single)
- Time spent (30-60 minutes)
- Social (3.2)

### Significant findings

- The Vicenarians were less influenced by the social aspects of a gym than the Tricenarians.
- The second highest percentage in terms of frequency of attendance was once a week.
- More members of this cluster were members of a gym for a period of less than five years.
- The main reason for not attending gym or cancelling their membership is a lack of motivation.
- Fewer Vicenarians had made friends in the gym. However, they were more likely to see these friends outside of gym as well.
- The Vicenarians gym because they feel that they have to.
- Proximity of the gym, discounts offered by medical aid or insurers, large variety of equipment, and the quality of the instructors were important aspects of a gym to this cluster.

Figure 6.3: Significant findings of the Vicenarian cluster.

The findings from the empirical and secondary data analyses, as well as the conclusions drawn and recommendations of the primary research objective are highlighted in Table 6.7.

**Table 6.7: Reflections on the primary research objective.**

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>
Develop a consumer typology based on the consumer behaviour of member of health and fitness centres.
<b>FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE</b>
Consumer typologies refer to an organisation grouping similar consumers together based on the behaviour of those consumers. These typologies allow the organisation to better understand the behaviours of their consumers and place them in a position to offer their consumers a more individualised service. Section 2.5.2 discusses consumer typologies and highlights some examples of consumer typologies in different studies, including wine drinkers, shoppers, or gym members.
<b>FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL DATA ANALYSIS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two-step cluster analyses were done to develop a respondent profile for both gym members and non-gym members (Section 5.5.2).</li> <li>• Two distinct profiles for gym members were identified from the two-step cluster analysis, namely the Vicenarians and the Tricenarians.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians had higher mean values for the five motivating factors than the Vicenarians.</li> <li>• Both clusters spent 30 minutes to an hour in the gym and attended the gym a couple of days a week. In terms of gym attendance, the second highest percentage of respondents in the Tricenarian cluster was once a day, while it was once a week for the Vicenarians.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians were very likely to renew their membership, whereas the Vicenarians were only somewhat likely to renew their membership.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians, in general, were married and had an Honours degree, while the Vicenarians were, in general, single with a Bachelor's degree.</li> <li>• A number of statistically significant differences were found between the two clusters with regard to their behaviour.</li> </ul>
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The five identified motivating factors (Health Enhancement, Health Necessity, Lifestyle, Enjoyment, and Social) were of greater importance to the Tricenarians than the Vicenarians.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians are inclined to attend gym on a more frequent basis than the Vicenarians.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians tend to be more loyal to their gyms than the Vicenarians in terms of their renewal behaviour.</li> <li>• Health reasons and lack of motivation were found to be the main barriers to exercise for the Tricenarians and the Vicenarians respectively.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians are more social at gym but tend to keep their gym friends and their other friends separate. Whereas the Vicenarians are less social at gym, but tend to see these friends outside of the gym as well.</li> </ul>

- The older members gym because they tend to enjoy it, while the younger members gym because they feel that they have to.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Two segmentation strategies, with different messages based on the consumer behaviour of the clusters, should be developed to communicate with the members of the different clusters.
- Two distinct marketing strategies should be developed by health and fitness centres in order to incentivise a person to attend a gym and to retain that person's membership.

In this section, the primary research objective was addressed, and conclusions and recommendations were indicated. In the next section, the main findings, recommendations, and conclusions for this study will be summarised.

## **6.5 SYNCHRONISATION OF THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the previous sections of this chapter, the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the secondary and primary research objectives of this study were discussed. Table 6.8 synchronises the main findings, conclusions, and recommendations of this study.

Table 6.8: Synchronisation of main findings, conclusions, and recommendations of this study.

Research objective	Main findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<b>Determine the influences that will affect an individual's decision to become a member of a health and fitness centre.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The top motivators that would get the respondents to become a member of a health and fitness centre were lower membership fees, the ability to customise their membership according to the equipment that they would use, fewer people in the centre, and if a close friend or family member were to join as well.</li> <li>The majority of the respondents attended a health and fitness centre to increase their general fitness, lose weight, or for stress relief and relaxation.</li> <li>The Health Enhancement factor had the highest level of agreement among the respondents, while the Lifestyle factor, had the lowest level of agreement among the respondents.</li> <li>The Health Enhancement and Lifestyle factors, as well as education, were deemed to be statistically significant predictors of gym membership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal motivating factors were more important to the respondents than the external motivating factors.</li> <li>The respondents believed that it was important to remain fit and healthy. They felt good after a workout session and they believed that the sweat and pain they experienced after a workout session was worth it. The respondents found working out to be a form of stress relief, and that it boosted their self-confidence levels. Furthermore, they perceived exercise to be a way of life.</li> <li>From the results, it would appear as though as a person grows older, he or she tends to enjoy gym more.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and fitness centres should focus on the internal factors of motivation when appealing to new members.</li> <li>The pleasure and enjoyment a workout session offers should be highlighted when attracting and retaining older members, while the results an individual can get from a workout session should be the focus when attracting and retaining younger members.</li> </ul>
<b>Determine the specific activities that members pursue at a health and fitness centre.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The most popular activities done by the respondents were cardiovascular training, circuit work, and free weights.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members pursue a variety of different activities in a health and fitness centre.</li> <li>The respondents felt that it was important that the centre had</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The latest, most modern equipment should be available, and all equipment should be in working order. Furthermore, health and fitness centres</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The modal category of the respondents indicated that they would like to have a running or cycling track at their gym, while other respondents indicated that the gyms needed more equipment.</li> <li>• The variety of equipment on offer was more important to the respondents than the quality of the instructors.</li> <li>• Boxing was deemed to be a statistically significant activity between the two gym member clusters, with more Tricenarians having partaken in this activity than Vicenarians</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the latest equipment and that supplementary services were available.</li> <li>• A running or cycling track was the activity that most of the respondents would like to see on offer at their respective health and fitness centres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• should consider introducing supplementary services, such as childcare facilities, cafeterias, and the like, should they not be available.</li> <li>• The centres should consider implementing some of the requested activities in order to attract new members or to increase the satisfaction of the current members.</li> <li>• Boxing, or boxing style exercises or classes, should be introduced in order to attract the members who are partaking or interested in this activity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Determine those factors that affect an individual's satisfaction with a health and fitness centre, as well as the behavioural intentions of the members in terms of their complaining intentions, promotion of the centre, renewal of their membership, or price sensitivity.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The convenient location of the gym, was the aspect that was liked the most by the respondents.</li> <li>• The majority of the respondents were happy with their gyms and were very likely to renew their gym membership, however, finances and over-crowding were the main reasons for members to cancel their membership.</li> <li>• Health reasons and a lack of motivation were statistically significant between the two gym member clusters in terms of cancelling a membership or not attending gym on a given day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The prices of memberships, as well as the amount of members in a particular gym, were found to be the main reasons for people to cancel their membership.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians have belonged to a gym for a longer period of time than the Vicenarians.</li> <li>• As people get older, they are more prone to health problems which could result in them not attending the gym on a given day. The younger respondents often tend to lack the motivation and willpower to attend gym on a given day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and fitness centres should restructure their packages in such a way as to keep the membership fees as low as possible as this was found to be a major barrier to gym membership.</li> <li>• The health benefits of regular exercise should be part of the advertising campaign of health and fitness centres if they wish to attract older members.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Vicenarians belonged to a gym for a period of less than five years compared to the Tricenarians, who had belonged to a gym for a period of more than five years.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Determine what motivates an individual to exercise, join, or remain a member of a health and fitness centre.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of the respondents joined a gym initially to get into shape or as a part of a lifestyle change.</li> <li>• The cost of a gym membership was the main reason why people chose not to belong to a gym.</li> <li>• Lower membership fees, customisable membership, and fewer people, would motivate the respondents to join a gym.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians are more inclined to gym because they enjoy it and that it is their life, while the Vicenarians are more inclined to gym because they feel that it is something that they have to do and because of the results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting into shape is the main reason people choose to join a health and fitness centre.</li> <li>• The cost of the membership was the biggest barrier to gym membership.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians gym because they enjoy it, while the Vicenarians feel that attending a gym is something that they have to do.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As an individual grows older, they tend to see gym as more of a pleasurable activity rather than as an essential (must do) activity. This should be emphasised by health and fitness centres should they wish to attract and retain more members</li> </ul>
<p><b>Explore the reasons why an individual would choose to join a health and fitness centre or not.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The members who opted to join a conventional health and fitness centre were not bothered by the other gym members, and they preferred the equipment and classes that these gyms offered.</li> <li>• The proximity of the gym emerged as the most important reason for selecting a particular gym.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The classes, operating hours and quality of the environment are important aspects to the Tricenarian cluster when selecting a gym of fitness centre. This ties in with the enjoyment and pleasure aspect of gymming for the older individuals.</li> <li>• The equipment, quality of the instructors, membership discounts, and the proximity of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The promotion of socialisation aspects, including group classes and training, should be promoted more to those members who are aged 30 and above.</li> <li>• The promotion of more individualised training, especially in terms of the equipment and instructors, should be targeted at the younger gym members.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The classes on offer, the operating hours, and the quality of the environment, were of greater importance to the Tricenarians when selecting a gym</li> <li>• The equipment on offer, the quality of the instructors, the discounts offered by medical aid or insurance, and the proximity of the gym, were of greater importance to the Vicenarians.</li> </ul>	<p>the gym are important aspects to the Vicenarian cluster when choosing a gym or fitness centre. This supports the finding that the younger respondents gym because they feel that they have to or because of the positive results of exercise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Tricenarians were less concerned with the other gym members in their gym than the Vicenarians.</li> <li>• The Tricenarians were more likely to make friends in the gym than the Vicenarians. However, the Vicenarians are more likely to see these friends outside of the gym, while the Tricenarians are more likely to see these friends at the gym only.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Identify other forms of exercise done by non-consumers and the reasons why these consumers choose not to belong to a health and fitness centre</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of the respondents who did not attend a gym or fitness centre walked, ran, or cycled around the block, or followed their own exercise routines at home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately half of the Somewhat Active cluster partake in other forms of exercise and have no interest in joining a gym.</li> <li>• The majority of the Non-Active cluster would consider joining a gym if the membership fees were cheaper, among other circumstances.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To attract new members, health and fitness centres could consider implementing measures that will result in lowering their membership fees, customisable memberships, or a reduction in the number of people (within reason).</li> <li>• Some of the respondents indicated that they would consider joining a health and fitness centre if a close friend or family member joined as well. Health and fitness centres could consider using this</li> </ul>

			approach by implementing two-for-one membership packages.
<b>Develop a consumer typology based on the consumer behaviour of members of health and fitness centres.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two distinct profiles for gym members were identified from the two-step cluster analysis, namely, the Vicenarians and the Tricenarians.</li> <li>Both clusters spent 30 minutes to an hour in the gym and attended the gym a couple of days a week. In terms of gym attendance, the second highest percentage of respondents in the Tricenarian cluster was once a day, while it was once a week for the Vicenarians.</li> <li>The Tricenarians were very likely to renew their membership, whereas the Vicenarians were only somewhat likely to renew their membership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Tricenarians are inclined to attend gym on a more frequent basis than the Vicenarians.</li> <li>The Tricenarians tend to be more loyal to their gyms than the Vicenarians in terms of their renewal behaviour.</li> <li>Health reasons and lack of motivation were found to be the main barriers to exercise for the Tricenarians and the Vicenarians respectively.</li> <li>The Tricenarians are more social at gym, but tend to keep their gym friends and their other friends separate. Whereas the Vicenarians are less social at gym, but tend to see these friends outside of the gym as well.</li> <li>The older members gym because they tend to enjoy it, while the younger members gym because they feel that they have to.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two segmentation strategies, with different messages based on the consumer behaviour of the clusters, should be developed to convince the members of the different clusters to join a gym.</li> <li>Two distinct marketing strategies should be developed by health and fitness centres in order to incentivise a person to attend a gym and to retain that person's membership.</li> </ul>

## **6.6 ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY**

Every study has certain assumptions and limitations which are applicable to the study in question. The assumptions and limitations of this study are highlighted in the sections that follow.

### **6.6.1 Assumptions of this study**

The researcher made the following assumptions with regard to this study:

- As the responses were anonymous, the researcher assumes that the respondents answered the survey truthfully.
- The researcher assumed that the respondents understood the questions asked in the survey.

### **6.6.2 Limitations of this study**

It is important to mention the limitations of this study as they can provide direction for further research possibilities. The following limitations were identified by the researcher for this study:

- Although this study was open to anyone who was on Facebook at the time the survey link was made available, the vast majority of the respondents were young, married females, who were permanently employed and resided in the Gauteng Province. This is, in no way, a reflection of the population, especially the gym member population, of the province or of South Africa in general. Therefore, the results of this survey cannot be generalised to any province or country.
- Some of the respondents may have misinterpreted some of the questions in the questionnaire. This resulted in some respondents answering the incorrect set of questions. For example, respondents who gymmed at home and not at an actual health and fitness centre, answered the questions for gym members and not the questions for non-gym members. Furthermore, the questionnaire may have been considered as too lengthy for some respondents, which may have impacted on the answers that were provided.
- Non-probability sampling, and in particular convenience sampling and snowball sampling, were used in this study. This meant that only those respondents who were on Facebook at the time that the questionnaire was posted were able to view and answer the

questionnaire. This could have had an impact on the nature of the demographic profile of the respondents.

- The results indicated two profiles of gym members. In reality, many such profiles can exist and consumers can be categorised in numerous ways. This study, in no way, definitively provides a categorisation of gym members in general – only a categorisation of the respondents of this study. It, however, does provide a starting point in the categorisation of gym members and the further development of a South African consumer behaviour typology.
- While useful, typologies rely on the assumption that individuals never change, and that their attitudes, identity, behaviours, and consumption patterns are stable. This is seldom the case, as individuals can change their buying behaviours and attitudes towards products and services on a day-to-day basis depending on their circumstances. Therefore, the typologies identified in this study, while true for this study, may not necessarily be true for studies in years to come.

In this section, the assumptions and limitations of this study were highlighted. In the next section, the contribution of this study to the body of knowledge and the future research possibilities on this topic will be discussed.

## **6.7 CONTRIBUTION TO THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE AND FUTURE RESEARCH POSSIBILITIES**

This study aimed to provide a brief overview of a consumer behaviour typology of members of health and fitness centres. This led to the identification of two distinct segments of gym members, each requiring a specific marketing and segmentation strategy in order to attract and retain these members. This will allow health and fitness centres to gain a better understanding of their members.

The following possible areas for future research were identified by the researcher:

- This study looked at the consumer behaviour of gym members in general, which led to generic responses being received. Future research could perhaps focus on the consumer behaviour of members of a specific gender, age, geographic location, or franchise. This will enable health and fitness centres to gain a more focused understanding of their specific markets.

- A comparison between the different generations' consumer behaviour could also be considered as a possible research area. This will further allow health and fitness centres to provide a more individualised service to their members.
- A longitudinal study involving more respondents could be undertaken in order to get a more holistic overview of the consumer behaviour of gym members, which may be generalised for the greater gym population of South Africa. This could provide further insights into the categorisation of gym members and develop a more in-depth typology for health and fitness centres.
- More research must be undertaken to understand the reasons why people do not want to attend a gym. The most obvious reasons given in this study, regarding financial means and a lack of time, are fairly generic and must be investigated further. More specifically, the reasons why previous members of a gym have cancelled their membership must be investigated further to understand the real reasons behind these decisions and what health and fitness centres can do to retain these consumers.

## **6.8 CONCLUSION**

The aim of this chapter was to provide an overarching conclusion to the study. In this chapter, a brief overview of the previous chapters was provided. The secondary research objectives were addressed, and conclusions and recommendations for each objective were drawn from the findings in the literature and empirical data analysis.

The primary research objective, namely, the development of a consumer typology for members of a health and fitness centre was also addressed. This study found that there were two distinct categories of members of health and fitness centres, each with their own characteristics. Certain aspects were deemed to be significant for each profile of gym members. A final recommendation was made that health and fitness centres should develop two segmentation strategies, as well as two distinct marketing strategies, based on the characteristics of each profile in order to attract and retain these members.

This chapter concluded with a brief mention of the assumptions and limitations of this study, as well as the contribution of this study to the body of knowledge and the identification of possible future research areas on this topic.

In closing, health and fitness centres should be mindful of the needs, wants, and behaviours of their members, as without their members, the centre will not make profits and the organisation will cease to exist. Through the development of typologies, health and fitness centres will be in a better position to segment their consumers and provide services that best suits the needs and wants of their diverse consumers.

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# APPENDIX A

## ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

### UNISA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

30 August 2017

Dear Mrs Rachelle Tanith Reeler,

ERC Reference #: 2017\_CEMS\_BM\_061

Name: Mrs Rachelle Tanith Reeler

Student #: 55723500

Staff #: 1944290

**Decision: Ethics Approval from**

**30 August 2017 to 29 August 2020**

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**Researcher(s):** Mrs Rachelle Tanith Reeler

E-mail address: [deysert@unisa.ac.za](mailto:deysert@unisa.ac.za)

Telephone #: 012 429 2057

**Supervisor (s):** Prof Johan Strydom

E-mail address: [strydjw@unisa.ac.za](mailto:strydjw@unisa.ac.za)

Telephone #: 012 429 4455

**Working title of research:**

Consumer behaviour typology of members of a health and fitness centre

**Qualification:** Masters Degree

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Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA Department of Business Management Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for 3 years, from 30 August 2017 to 29 August 2020.

*The **low risk application** was reviewed by the Department of Business Management Ethics Review Committee on 23 August 2017 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the Department of Business Management Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines, and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013, Children's Act, no 38 of 2005, and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date (29 August 2020). Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Review Committee approval.

*Note:*

*The reference number **2017\_CEMS\_BM\_061** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Yours sincerely,



**Chair: Prof Sharon Rudansky-Kloppers**



**Executive Dean: Prof Thomas Mogale**

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# **APPENDIX B**

## **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

Title: Consumer behaviour typology of members of a health and fitness centre.

### **Dear Prospective Participant**

My name is Rachelle Reeler and I am doing research with Prof. Johan Strydom, a Professor in the Department of Business Management towards a Master's degree in Business Management at the University of South Africa. I am inviting you to participate in a study entitled "Consumer behaviour typology of members of a health and fitness centre".

### **WHAT IS THE AIM/PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?**

The aim of this study is to develop a consumer typology of members that attend a health and fitness centre. This will help health and fitness centres to categorise their consumers and enable them to provide a more individualised service that best suits their different customers' needs.

### **WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?**

You have been invited to participate in this research as you have been identified as an individual who either attends or does not attend a gym or fitness centre. Your valuable inputs will assist the researcher in developing a consumer typology, or consumer categorisation, for health and fitness centres.

### **WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY / WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH INVOLVE?**

The study involves a survey that should take you approximately 10 minutes to complete. The questionnaire comprises a number of closed ended questions that will relate to your attitudes, experiences, and expectations regarding health and fitness centres.

### **CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY?**

Participation in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. You are free to withdraw at any time prior to submitting the completed questionnaire and without giving a reason.

### **WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

The potential benefits of the study for the health and fitness centres are that these centres will be able to offer their customers a more individualised service that caters more effectively to the customer's needs and

requirements of a health and fitness centre. This should enhance the customer's experience with a particular health and fitness centre.

#### **WHAT IS THE ANTICIPATED INCONVENIENCE OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

There are no potential inconveniences or discomfort envisaged for participating in this study. Furthermore, there is no risk of physical or psychological harm to any individual or organisation by taking part in this research.

#### **WILL WHAT I SAY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

All information that you provide in this research will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Your name, or any other identifiable variable, will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a fictitious code number or a pseudonym (should this be required) and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the statistician and members of the Research Ethics Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

Your anonymous data may be used for other purposes such as research reports, journal articles, conference presentations, and so on. *Individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.* Instead, your answers will be grouped with other participants who provided similar answers to order to give an overall view of the consumer behaviour of members of health and fitness centres.

#### **HOW WILL INFORMATION BE STORED AND ULTIMATELY DESTROYED?**

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet for future research or academic purposes. All electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer or separate hard drive. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. Once the research has been completed, and there is no further use for the data, the hard copies of the questionnaires will be shredded and all electronic information will be permanently deleted.

#### **WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?**

There will be no payments or incentives offered to any participant for participating in this research study.

**HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?**

The study fulfils all the requirements as set out in the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and has received written approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the College of Economic and Management Sciences, Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

**HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS?**

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, or should you require any further information about any aspect of this study, please contact Rachelle Reeler on 083 453 4829 or via email at [deysert@unisa.ac.za](mailto:deysert@unisa.ac.za). The findings are accessible for six months.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact my supervisor, Prof Johan Strydom on 012 429 4455 or [strydjw@unisa.ac.za](mailto:strydjw@unisa.ac.za).

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.



Rachelle Reeler

# APPENDIX C

## QUESTIONNAIRE

**Ethical clearance #: 2017\_CEMS\_BM\_061**

Dear Prospective participant,

You are invited to participate in a survey conducted by Rachelle Reeler under the supervision of Prof Johan Strydom, a Professor in the Department of Business Management towards Master's degree in Business Management at the University of South Africa.

The survey you have received has been designed to study the consumer behaviour of members of a gym or fitness centre. You were selected to participate in this survey because you are known to either attend or not attend a gym. Please note that you will not be eligible to complete the survey if you are younger than 18 years. By completing this survey, you agree that the information you provide may be used for research purposes, including dissemination through peer-reviewed publications and conference proceedings.

It is anticipated that the information we gain from this survey will help us to develop a consumer typology of members of a health and fitness centre, based on the members' behaviour. You are, however, under no obligation to complete the survey and you can withdraw from the study prior to submitting the survey. The survey is developed to be anonymous, meaning that we will have no way of connecting the information that you provide to you. Consequently, you will not be able to withdraw from the study once you have clicked the send button based on the anonymous nature of the survey. If you choose to participate in this survey it will take up no more than 10 to 15 minutes of your time. You will not benefit from your participation as an individual, however, it is envisioned that the findings of this study will assist gyms and fitness centres to more effectively understand their consumers, and provide them with the means to offer a more individualised service. We do not foresee that you will experience any negative consequences by completing the survey. The researcher(s) undertake to keep any information provided herein confidential, not to let it out of our possession and to report on the findings from the perspective of the participating group and not from the perspective of an individual.

The records will be kept for five years for audit purposes where after it will be permanently destroyed. All hard copies will be shredded and electronic versions will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the survey.

The research was reviewed and approved by the Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Business Management. The primary researcher, Rachelle Reeler, can be contacted during office hours at 083 453

4829, or at [deysert@unisa.ac.za](mailto:deysert@unisa.ac.za). The study leader, Prof Johan Strydom, can be contacted during office hours at 012 429 4455 or [strydjw@unisa.ac.za](mailto:strydjw@unisa.ac.za). Should you have any questions regarding the ethical aspects of the study, you can contact the chairperson of the Business Management Ethics Research Committee, Prof Sharon Rudansky-Kloppers, at 012 429 4689 or [rudans@unisa.ac.za](mailto:rudans@unisa.ac.za). Alternatively, you can report any serious unethical behaviour at the University's Toll Free Hotline 0800 86 96 93.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate by continuing to the next page. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time prior to clicking the send button.

### Dear Respondent

The purpose of this survey is to determine your attitudes and behaviour towards gyms and fitness centres in South Africa. The survey should not take you more than 10 - 15 minutes to complete. This is an anonymous and confidential survey. You cannot be identified, and your answers will be used for research purposes only. No harm will come to you or any organisation by partaking in this survey. There are no right or wrong answers, and you are free to withdraw from the survey at any point in time.

**PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU ATTEND A GYM YOU MUST PLEASE COMPLETE SECTIONS A, B AND C. IF YOU DO NOT ATTEND A GYM, PLEASE COMPLETE SECTIONS A, B AND D**

### SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The following questions relate to your biographical information. Please select the option that is most applicable to you by placing a **X** in the box provided. Please select only one answer per question.

#### 1. What is your age?

Between 18 and 19 years old	
Between 20 and 29 years old	
Between 30 and 39 years old	
Between 40 and 49 years old	
Between 50 and 59 years old	
Between 60 and 70 years old	

#### 2. What is your gender?

Male	
Female	

#### 3. What is your marital status?

Single	
Married	
Living with partner, but not married	
Divorced	
Widowed	

**4. How would you describe your family and home life?**

Single, living alone	
Living with spouse/partner	
Living with spouse/partner and one child	
Living with spouse/partner and between two and four children	
Living with spouse/partner and more than four children	
Living with other dependents	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**5. What is your highest level of education?**

Less than Grade 12	
Grade 12 (matric)	
Higher Certificate	
Diploma	
Bachelors Degree	
Honours Degree	
Masters Degree	
Doctorate Degree	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. What is your employment status?**

Student	
Unemployed	
Temporarily employed (including Fixed Term Contracts)	
Permanently employed on a full-time basis	
Permanently employed on a part-time basis	
Retired	

**7. In which province do you currently reside?**

Gauteng	
Mpumalanga	
North West	
Limpopo	
KwaZulu Natal	
Eastern Cape	
Northern Cape	
Free State	
Western Cape	
Outside of South Africa	



## SECTION B: ATTITUDE TOWARDS HEALTH AND FITNESS

This section relates to your attitude towards health and fitness on a five-point scale. For each of the statements, please select the option that best describes how you feel about health and fitness. Please indicate your answer by placing a **X** in the box. There is no right or wrong answer, so please provide your honest opinion.

	Strongly Disagree 1	Somewhat Disagree 2	Neutral/ Undecided 3	Somewhat Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
I feel it is important to remain fit and healthy.					
I feel good after a workout session.					
I follow a healthy diet.					
The sweat and pain after an exercise session is worth it.					
Working out tends to lower my stress levels.					
Exercising has boosted my self-confidence levels.					
I exercise only because I have to.					
Exercise is fun.					
I like to wear sports clothing.					
I tend to keep up with the latest fitness trends.					
Exercise is a way of life.					
I perceive exercise to be unavoidable.					
I am concerned with my overall health and well-being and, therefore, I exercise.					
In my free time, I can be found in the gym or doing other forms of exercise.					
Exercise is boring for me.					
Even when working out, it is important for me to look good.					
I find watching other people work out to be entertaining.					
Exercise is more fun with friends.					
I enjoy partaking in a number of different sporting codes.					
I often find excuses for not exercising.					

I follow an athlete's way of life, in that I follow a specific eating and training plan.					
Exercise is a social activity.					
I exercise because it is good for me.					

## SECTION C: GYM AND FITNESS CENTRE EXPERIENCE

This section relates to your personal experience with attending a gym or fitness centre. For each of the questions, please select the option that best describes your fitness experience. **This section must only be answered if you currently belong to and attend a gym or fitness centre.** If you do not currently belong to a gym or fitness centre, or you have recently cancelled your membership, please skip this section and answer section D instead. Please indicate your answer by placing a **X** in the box. There is no right or wrong answer, so please provide your honest opinion. Unless otherwise specified, please select only one answer from the options provided.

**Are you a current member of a gym?**

Yes	
No	

**IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO THIS QUESTION, THEN PLEASE CONTINUE TO ANSWER THIS SECTION. IF YOU ANSWERED NO, THEN PLEASE SKIP THIS SECTION AND ANSWER SECTION D.**

**8. How often do you attend a gym or fitness centre?**

Once a day	
More than once a day	
A couple of days a week	
Once a week	
Once a month	
Less than once a month	

**9. How much time do you tend to spend in the gym during any given session?**

30 minutes or less	
Between 30 minutes and an hour	
Between one and two hours	
Between two and three hours	
Longer than three hours	

**10. What activities do you do in the gym? (Select as many options as necessary)**

Cardiovascular training (such as treadmill, cycling or rowing)	
Circuit work (machine work)	
Free weights (for example bench press and deadlifts)	
Swimming	
Classes (for example spinning, Zumba or aerobics etc.)	
Boxing	
Body weight	
Cross Fit type training	
Whatever the instructor tells me	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Why did you start gymming?**

Lifestyle change	
Getting married/ had children	
To get into shape	
Benefits from medical aid	
Doctor's recommendation	
Recommendation of family or friend	
Socialisation	
Rehabilitation	
Professional/amateur athlete	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**12. What type of gym or fitness centre do you attend?**

Health club chain, such as Planet Fitness or Virgin Active	
Female only gym, such as Curves	
Privately owned gym	
Specialised fitness centres, such as Pilate Studios or Cross Fit	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**13. If you attend a female only gym, such as Curves, please indicate your reasons why. (You may select more than one answer).**

Not applicable	
I feel more comfortable when there are only women in the gym	
I do not feel self-conscious around other women	
I feel that other women will lift me up and support me	
I prefer the work out you get when the equipment and exercise programme are geared towards women	
I prefer the socialisation aspects of attending a women only gym.	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**14. If you attend a gym, such as Virgin Active or Planet Fitness, which has both male and female members, please indicate your reasons why. (You may select more than one answer).**

Not applicable	
It does not bother me that there are males and females training in the same space.	
I prefer training when both genders are present	
I attend gym with friends from both genders.	
I prefer the equipment that they have on offer.	
I enjoy attending the classes, which are not normally found in other gyms.	
I prefer the atmosphere of these types of gyms.	
I enjoy the socialisation aspects of attending such a gym.	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**15. How long have you been a member of your gym or fitness centre?**

Less than one year	
Between one and five years	
Between five and ten years	
Longer than ten years	

**16. What are the main reasons why you attend your specific gym? (Please rate the given options in order with one being the most important reason, and eight being the least important reason)**

Closest gym or fitness centre to me	
Cheapest membership fees	
Operating hours	
Discounts offered by medical aid provider or insurer	
Large variety of equipment	
Quality of the environment	
Quality of the instructors	
Classes on offer	

**17. What aspect of your gym or fitness centre do you like the most?**

The quality of the equipment	
The professionalism of the staff members	
The convenience of the gym in terms of its location or price	
The overall atmosphere of the gym	
Supplementary benefits such as saunas, childcare facilities etc.	
Social factors	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**18. What aspect of your gym or fitness centre do you like the least?**

The quality of the equipment	
The professionalism of the staff members	
The inconvenience of the gym in terms of its location or price	
The overall atmosphere of the gym	
Supplementary benefits such as saunas, childcare facilities etc.	
Social factors	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**19. What is your main reason for gymming currently? (You may select more than one option if necessary)**

Increase general fitness	
Build muscle (hypertrophy)	
Strength and conditioning	
Weight loss/lifestyle change	
Muscle toning	
On Doctor's recommendation	
Rehabilitation	

Professional athlete	
Enjoyment and pleasure	
Relaxation and stress relief	
Socialisation	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**20. Have you made new friends/ acquaintances while at the gym?**

Yes	
No	

**21. How would you classify your relationship with the friends you made at gym?**

Not applicable	
Only see them at gym	
See them both at gym and outside of gym	
Classify them as some of my best and closest friends	

**22. Which of the following statements best describe your current attitude towards gymming?  
Please select only one option**

I gym because I have to	
I gym because I enjoy it	
I gym because of the results	
I gym because it's my life	
I gym because of the social interaction I get	

**23. How important is it for you that the gym has the latest and modern equipment?**

Very important	
Somewhat important	
Not important	
I don't mind as long as the equipment works	

**24. How important is it for you that your gym offers supplementary services such as a sauna, childcare facilities or a cafeteria?**

Very important	
Somewhat important	
Not important	
I don't think they are necessary	

**25. What is the main reason for not attending gym on a given day? (You may select more than one reason if necessary)**

Health reasons	
Things outside of your control, such as the weather or traffic	
Lack of motivation	
Lack of time	
Gym partner cannot make it	

Other	
-------	--

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**26. What activities, that are not currently offered at your gym, would you like to see being offered at your gym? (You may select more than one option)**

More relaxed classes, such as stretching, Pilates, or Yoga	
Marital arts and high energy classes, such as Kickboxing, dancing or Zumba	
Swimming pool	
Water classes, such as water aerobics	
Individual attention from personal trainers, including meal plans	
More equipment	
Squash courts	
Running or cycling track	
Bootcamp or Crossfit type training	
Sunbeds, spas and hair stylists	
Saunas or Jacuzzis	
Cafeteria	
Childcare facilities	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**27. How likely are you to renew your membership and encourage others to join your gym?**

Very likely	
Somewhat likely	
Still deciding	
Not very likely	

**28. If you were to cancel your gym membership, what would the main reason be for this decision? (You may pick more than one answer if necessary)**

Financial reasons	
The gym does not offer the services I want	
My gym partner cancelled their membership	
Loss of motivation	
Family or work commitments	
Health reasons	
The gym became too overcrowded	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION D: REASONS FOR NON-ATTENDANCE**

This section relates to your reasons for not attending a gym or fitness centre. **Please only complete this section if you do not have a gym membership.** For each of the questions, please select the option that best describes your reasons for not attending a gym or fitness centre. Please indicate your answer by placing a **X** in the box. There is no right or wrong answer, so please provide your honest opinion.

**ONLY ANSWER THIS SECTION IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER OF A GYM**

**29. What is the main reason for you not attending a gym or fitness centre?**

I do not enjoy exercise.	
I cannot afford a gym membership.	
There is no gym nearby.	
I do not see the point in joining a gym.	
I dislike being around so many people.	
I do not feel motivated to join a gym or do exercise	
I have had bad experiences with a gym	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**30. For how long have you not been a gym member?**

I have never belonged to a gym	
Less than a month	
Between one and six months	
Between six months and a year	
Between one and five years	
Longer than five years	

**31. If you have recently cancelled your gym membership (within the last 12 months), what were the reasons for this decision?**

Not applicable	
Financial reasons	
Not seeing the benefits	
Lack of time	
Bad personal experiences	
Want to try other forms of exercise and training	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**32. Do you do any other form of sport or exercise?**

Yes	
No	

**33. If you answered yes, please indicate what other forms of exercise you do. (Please select as many as necessary)**

Not applicable	
I follow my own exercise routine at home.	
I have a personal trainer who comes to my home.	
I attend other exercise groups, such as Cross Fit, or Adventure Bootcamp for Women.	
I do other sporting disciplines, such as rugby, soccer, dancing, equestrian etc.	
I go for a walk or run around the block	
Other	



If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**34. How often do you engage in these activities?**

Not applicable	
Once a day	
More than once a day	
A couple of days a week	
Once a week	
Once a month	
Less than once a month	

**35. How much time will you generally spend on these activities?**

Not applicable	
30 minutes or less	
Between 30 minutes and an hour	
Between one and two hours	
Between two and three hours	
Longer than three hours	

**36. What reasons, if any, would get you to become a member of a gym? (You may select more than one option)**

I have no interest in joining a gym any time soon	
If gym membership were cheaper.	
If the gym was opened at more convenient times (for example open late at night or in the early hours of the morning).	
If the gym was more conveniently located.	
If a close friend or family member were to join as well.	
If there was more individual attention.	
If there were fewer people.	
If I received orders from a Doctor.	
If gymming became fun.	
If the gym offered more variety	
If I could customise my membership according to the equipment I would use	
Other	

If you selected "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX D**

### **FREQUENCY TABLES**

The frequency tables used for the analysis of the data can be found on the Compact Disc (CD) attached or made available upon request.